



P O E M S

A N D

M I S C E L L A N I E S

SELECTED FROM THE

WRITINGS OF MISS ELIZA TOWNSEND.

PRINTED BUT NOT PUBLISHED.



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INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

THIS volume is printed for the use of friends, as a memorial of the late Miss ELIZA TOWNSEND, a lady whose gifts and virtues had, for many years, drawn around her the unfeigned respect and love of a large circle in this community. She was born in Boston, June, 1788, spent her life in her native city, and died at her house in Hawkins street, on the night of January 12th, 1854, in the sixty-sixth year of her age. It is an act of simple justice to present a prefatory record, however inadequate, of grateful reminiscence.

To attempt to delineate in a few words, and in strong, life-like colors, the several distinct points, each by itself, which present themselves as we remember Miss Townsend, would be like trying to decompose a fine fragrance into its component parts. She has been known and distinguished among us as a literary character, not of the school of the present day so much as of a past period. Her acquaintance with the British classics was very remarkable; and in the walks of English literature, and among the thoughts of the worthies of England's golden age, she was entirely at home. On themes like these she was truly eloquent; for here her heart and intellect met in happy sympathy. Her friends of former days, as well as those of a recent period, cannot fail to remember with what delight they were accustomed to listen to the easy flow, the rich and sometimes gorgeous style of her conversation, when she was interested and excited by animating trains of thought; for there have been among us few so good talkers. She had a quick and strong perception of poetical beauty and sublimity. No one could be acquainted with Miss Townsend, without perceiving that her mind was of a high order. It was rich in the gathered

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stores of early and long continued culture, embellished by a living fancy, and made effective by a sound judgment. Those who were familiar with her, were much impressed with this wealth of her mind, but at the same time felt that there was nothing in it approaching to exhibition or display. What of literature she had—and it was by no means an ordinary share—sat gracefully and appropriately upon her character. Most evidently it had been gathered not to be shown, but because the love of elegant letters was a natural, spontaneous taste. This high mental culture was the more remarkable, when we consider that in her early years the field of female education was by no means so wide and diversified as at present. What she gained came not from the forcing processes of the schools, but from an innate love of intellectual improvement.

It should be added that the rapid growth and expansive strength of her mind were greatly promoted by the excellent instructions and advice of a brother, whom she dearly loved, and whose memory she always cherished with the fondest affections of a sister's heart—the late Alexander Townsend, Esq., long well-known in Boston as a man of vigorous mind and warm heart, an accomplished gentleman, and a lawyer of high reputation. *

As a writer, Miss Townsend evinced an energy of thought and a vigor of imagination, which won for her a high place in the estimation of the best judges. Her prose style was strong, terse and impressive; and her poetry breathed the power of genius. She published many beautiful poetical pieces, some of which were suggested by occasions, and some were furnished to the periodicals of a former day. Mr. Griswold made a selection from them in his volume entitled “The Female Poets of America;” and in the introductory notice Mr. Griswold remarks that Miss Townsend “was the first native poet of her sex, whose writings commanded the applause of judicious critics—the first whose poems evinced any real inspiration, or rose from the merely mechanical into the domain of art.” He adds—“The late Mr. Nicholas Biddle, whose judgment in literature was frequently illustrated by the most admirable criticisms, once mentioned to me that a Prize Ode which

* Mr. Townsend died April 5, 1835, aged 52 years.

Miss Townsend wrote for the Port Folio,* while he himself was editor of that miscellany, soon after the death of Dennie, was, in his opinion, the finest poem of its kind which at that time had been written in this country; and many of her other pieces received the best approval of the period, but, as she kept her authorship a secret, without securing for her any personal reputation." Among the pieces omitted in Mr. Griswold's selection is a very beautiful one entitled "The Rainbow,"† which was published in the third volume of "The General Repository and Review,"—a journal edited by Mr. Andrews Norton, Cambridge, 1813. Several of Miss Townsend's later poems were of a religious character. Of one of these, on "The Incomprehensibility of God,"‡ the Rev. Dr. Cheever has said, that "it is equal in grandeur to the Thanatopsis of Bryant, and that it will not suffer by comparison with the most sublime pieces of Wordsworth or of Coleridge." It was difficult to overcome her reluctance to be known as a writer, and in late years she shunned entirely the notoriety of authorship.

With this strength of mind was united in Miss Townsend an uncommonly quick sensibility of feeling. Her own sympathy was both easily moved, and deep. There was a peculiar beauty in her love to her friends, and in her kindness to their friends. She felt a warm and hearty interest in such as were connected with those whom she had loved, and whose cherished memory seemed to say to her, "inasmuch as ye have done it unto them, ye have done it unto me." To the poor and the distressed she was a generous friend. She seemed always to think more of others than of herself. If she was indifferent to the comfort and indulgence of any one, it was to her own. Her keen sensibility to cases of suffering and sorrow created perhaps the only disquiet to her otherwise tranquil happiness. But stronger even than that feeling was her trust in Him, who maketh all things work together for good.

One could not but be impressed with the serious integrity of feeling and of judgment, which marked alike the conduct and the opinions of Miss Townsend.

* See page 139 of this volume.

† See page 133.

‡ See page 80.

What she thought and did was the result of a definite, matured state of mind. While her emotions were lively and warm, they always seemed the outgrowth of principle, not the sudden start of impulse. Whether you agreed with her views or not, you always felt that they had been adopted in perfect honesty of judgment, and with a deep sense of their truth and importance. There was no trifling, no indifference, no carelessness, no playing fast and loose, in the processes of her moral or intellectual nature. With all this firmness, she had a fair and kind regard to the beliefs of others, however much they differed from her own. There was certainly no lack of independence; and as certainly there was no lack of charity. Warmth of feeling mingled with her opinions, enough to make them seem deeply real and truthful, but not so as to communicate to them the heat of passion. On nearly all subjects in literature, in religion, in civil and social matters, her taste and turn of thought were strongly conservative. But her conservatism was not a prejudice, not a blind adhesion to the old or the past, but a settled conviction that the principles, on which she formed her judgments, were sound, salutary and righteous. If she was not a philanthropist in the way which others chose, she was so in her own way of kindness and of doing good. She would not be importuned into giving aid where she did not believe the claim to be just and right; but in cases selected by her own conscientious judgment, her unostentatious bounty was ready and true hearted,—as kind in manner as it was benevolent in spirit. There was in her character a union of firmness, of sympathy, and of excellent feeling, which no one who knew her well could fail to respect.

It should be said of Miss Townsend that she was a sincerely religious woman. The Unitarian faith was that which substantially approved itself to her judgment and her spiritual feelings. For its leading views she entertained an enlightened and well-established preference. But no person could be more free from bondage to a sect. She rose above all party predilections to the great and holy principles which bring the soul into hallowed union with God and the Savior. It was manifest that upon these she loved to rest her deepest interest and affections. Nothing would sooner awaken her indignation than any instance of narrowness or

bigotry, let it appear in what part of the religious community it might, whether in that to which she was herself attached, or in another. With respect to doctrinal peculiarities, and the hope of acceptance with God for the conscientious and the good, her soul was as large, free, and comprehensive as the spirit of the Gospel itself. She was well acquainted with the prevalent theological discussions, and spoke of them in a manner which showed that her fine understanding could apply itself to these topics with the same clearness and dignity of thought, which marked its other developments. No one heard from her a word of asperity on such subjects. There was sometimes a playfulness in noting what she believed to be religious errors, which instead of appearing as levity, only testified to the kindly spirit that ran through all her feelings and statements. For the institutions of Christianity Miss Townsend cherished a hearty reverence. In attendance on the public services of religion she was constant, not as a matter of custom, but because she loved the associations and privileges of the sanctuary. The interest she felt in preaching and in religious books was evinced by her frequent discussion of them with such candor, seriousness, and practical appreciation of their value, as might well rebuke the flippant tone of frivolous criticism so common in these matters. Her faith in the Gospel was a deep, living sentiment. He who came to bring life and immortality to light, was in very deed to her the way, the truth, and the life ; and by habitual communion with God on earth her soul was ripened for that better communion to which she has ascended.

Our tribute to the memory of this excellent lady is offered heartily, because it is believed to be honestly merited. Her departure from the midst of us has left a void in the old and dear associations of many, which will not easily be filled. But the eye of faith looks with calm trust to that which is highest.

“ Yet again we hope to meet thee,
When the day of life has fled,
Then in heaven with joy to greet thee,
Where no farewell tear is shed.”

The manuscripts which Miss Townsend left are of a miscellaneous character, produced as occasions in which she was interested happened to suggest. From these, and from writings already in print, a sister, who, after having lived by her side many years of dearly remembered happiness, is now deeply chastened by a loss which has left her alone in the world, has made such a selection as seemed best fitted to represent her genius and taste. It is hoped and believed that it will prove an acceptable memorial to those who have known and loved this gifted lady. The pieces are arranged in chronological order, as far as the dates of their composition are known.

C O N T E N T S .

	Page.
Introductory Notice,	1
To A. T., on his importuning the writer to compose something of magnitude,	9
Tributary Lines—to James Fennell,.....	11
Lines on the Death of Mrs. Warren, formerly Mrs. Merry, of the London Theatre,	18
Occasional Ode,.....	21
To Cheerfulness,	34
A Hymn for First of May,.....	37
A Petition,	39
Another " Castle in the Air,"	41
To Sarah, Countess of Rumford,	44
An Epitaph on Mrs. Mary H. Shaw, daughter of Judge Howel, of Providence, ..	47
Yesterday, To-day, To-morrow,.....	49
An Inscription,.....	55
Stanzas commemorative of Charles B. Brown, of Philadelphia, Author of " Wieland," " Cimond," " Arthur Mervyn," etc.	59
Stanzas,	64
A Rhapsody. To Robert Southey,.....	67
Duncan M'Intosh,.....	75
Incomprehensibility of God,.....	80
Lines to the Memory of Thomas F. Palmer,.....	83
The Eastern King and Southern Queen, (A Hebrew Fable,)	85
A Vision,	91
A Ballad occasioned by the late fatal Combat on the Maryland Border,.....	99
A Fragment,.....	106
To C—,.....	110
" When shall we three meet again ?"	112
The Vase,	114

	Page.
Stanzas commemorative of the twenty-third day of December, 1815, when the British were repulsed from New Orleans. An attempted Imitation of Sir Walter Scott's Verses on Mr. Pitt's Birthday,.....	118
Stanzas on a View of Newstead Park, belonging to a Seat late the Property of the Right Honorable Lord Byron,.....	121
Stanzas supposed to have been written near a Villa in Naples, once the residence of Emma, Lady Hamilton,	128
The Rainbow,.....	133
Ocean. A Naval Prize Ode,.....	139
A Fragment,.....	152
The First Gravestone,.....	155
The Dead,.....	157
Lines suggested by a Study-Chair belonging to the late Horace Holley,.....	159
On a Wreath brought by F. Alexander from the tomb of Abelard and Heloise, in Pere le Chaise,.....	161
An Inscription for a Monument to the Memory of Gen. Humphreys,.....	163
Lines on a Stone from the Field of Waterloo,.....	165
To A. T., at Washington,	167
A Dirge, written at the decease of John Adams, July 4, 1826,.....	169
Ode to whom it concerns,.....	174
To M——.....	180
Lines to a Wall-Flower from the Coliseum,.....	182
To our Java Sparrows,.....	185
Little Canary,.....	187
The Dead Bird,	189
To little "Wag,".....	190
The Wife of Seaton, or the Siege of Berwick : an Historic Tragedy,	198
Considerations on the Character of Lady Macbeth,.....	261
Childe Harold,	272
Rokeby,.....	286
Montgomery's Poems,	300
Waverly,	314
Madame Necker,	323
Madame de Maintenon,.....	331
Thoughts on Milton,	336
On Mrs. Grant's Letter relative to George IV and Queen Caroline,.....	345
Obituary,.....	353

POEMS AND MISCELLANIES.

POEMS AND MISCELLANIES.

TO A. T.

ON HIS IMPORTUNING THE WRITER TO COMPOSE SOMETHING OF MAGNITUDE.

[Salem, 1808.]

OFT have you said, (or scolded rather,)
In many a literary quarrel,
Why strive these useless sprigs to gather,
E'en though they should be "sprigs of laurel?"
No! strive to have some lofty tree,
Whose branches stretching o'er the plain,
Reclined beneath thou 'lt gladly see;
Then take thy ease, nor plant again!
Thou dearest one! and dost thou, then,
Prize the rude lines I thus indite?
And think of manners and of men
Thy minstrel qualified to write?
Grant that "the tree" thy wish would raise,
To meet thy wish, had grown and flourished,

Protected by thy guardian praise,
And by thy kind attention nourished ;
Grant that its early buds were fair,
That taste and tint its fruits combined ;
Its dewy foliage cooled the air,
Its balmy fragrance blessed the wind ;
Grant that its roots were firmly fixed,
Its limbs its just proportion knew,
Duly its soft'ning shadows mixed,
And pruned each shoot that wildly grew ;—
All unadmired those leaves would fade,
Untasted be that fruitage-store ;
Ah ! withered soon its slighted shade,
Its wasted fragrance breathed no more !—
Thy hand alone, indulgent friend,
Its garlands, meet for praise, would twine,
And ev'ry sweet it e'er might lend,
Would satisfy no sense but thine.
Then cease, thou partial prompter, cease
The wish to urge a loftier strain ;
The humble-hearted taste a peace
The rash aspirant ne'er could gain,
And still indulge the careless muse ;
These wild-flower shoots, as wont entwined,
The tears of love its only dews,
Then graft the chaplet on thy mind.

TRIBUTARY LINES.

TO JAMES FENNELL.

WHERE is the one, whose soul of amplest plan
In Nature's mint received the stamp of man ?
When erst the goddess, fired with noblest rage
At the vile cheatings of a bankrupt age ;
Intent her treasury, the stage, to clear
From dazzling counterfeits, late current here ;
Bade from her mines their purest ore be brought,
Mines, pervious only to the track of thought ;
And taught the braggart witlings to behold,
And learn the diff'rence 'twixt their dross and gold.
While just discernments give to worth its due,
Detect base metal, and admire the true.

Say where the one, thus singled from an host,
Nature's exemplar, votary, and boast ?
Tell me, ye crowds, who owns that eye-ball's glare,
That form majestic, and that martial air ?
Who, grateful for the impress which he bore,
Has much received, but still has rendered more.

* First printed in "The Emerald," Boston, 1808.

Language to him unlocks her countless stores ;
And deep and wide the critic's glance explores,
Illumes the archives, gives the poets' lore
To speak a latent sense, unknown before ;
While Taste's keen orbs their covert charms discern,
And teach their "thoughts to breathe, their words to burn ;"
Judgment's strong lamp emits a steadier ray,
And Fancy's sunbeams blaze a brighter day.
Supremely skilled to point the forceful phrase
Of secret rancor or ingenuous praise ;
Minutest meaning, studious to explain,
Nor let a particle be given in vain !

A thousand voices swell the loud acclaim ;

A thousand voices echo FENNELL'S name.

All hail, thou master of the drama's art !

Thou necromancer of the human heart !

Thou speak'st the word ; — it glows with tenfold heat,

Thou speak'st again ; — its pulses cease to beat.

With wily potency, thy skill entwines

The charm that trances, and the spell that binds.

Like the weird sisters at thy MACBETH'S word,

The subject Passions throng around their lord.

While strong Enchantment's various force he tries,

These sink to softness, those to frenzy rise ;

Empowered Despair's dark breast with Hope to cheer,

And wring from Cruelty Compassion's tear.

To thrill with joy, transfix in awe profound,
Melt with a look, and madden with a sound.

But bolder yet ; thou dar'dst thy way to wind
Throughout the devious mazes of the mind !
Nature, here too, allowed th' advent'rous claim,
Herself an ARIADNE to its aim.

Led by her *clue*, and with her ensigns graced,
The *human labyrinth* her champion traced ;
Where each crooked purpose, with alternate power,
Becomes the *Monster* of the darkened hour.
Where embryo mischiefs nameless ill *presage*,
Or plagues embodied taint a *present* age ;
Where the brain quivers with its own intent,
And guilt's design becomes guilt's punishment ;
Where crazed Reflection to a fiend dilates,
And starts from furies which itself creates !

Conversant thus with moral, mental power,
'Tis these have taught thy genius thus to tower ;
More than thy voice's strength, thy awful mien,
Thy frown tremendous, or thy smile serene !
Contemned the churlish contrast that essays
To sink the *player's* worth, the *poet's* raise.
Restored an art half lost by false pretence,
And proved the drama's proud pre-eminence !
So rare in one the varying gifts unite,
Our country thought to "die without the sight."

Myriads indeed, with high, theatic rage,
Or mere mechanic art, can stalk the stage ;
Can leave their writer's meaning on the shelf,
And find a substitute in sapient self ;
Till broad Burlesque too plainly shows his face,
And struggling Laughter bids Grief give him place ;
While poor MELPOMENE, o'ercome with shame,
Disowns the changeling that assumed her name.

But he who wears his author deep enshrined,
Joins heart to heart, and mixes mind with mind ;
Feels as *he* wrote, enforces all *he* taught,
Quickens perception, and embodies thought ;
Bear witness, Truth ! Scarce such an one appears
Within the circuit of an hundred years.

Though scores of *poets* graced ELIZA's throne,
The perfect *player* was a prize unknown.
'Twas this conviction Avon's bard impressed,
To task with foreign aim his restless breast,
Made buskined JONSON *seem* the wretch he knew,
And SHAKESPEARE *act* the character he *drew*.
Most rash and vain ! Was genius e'er assigned
Without some limit its excess to bind ?
Enough ; his mind's creative daring placed
A second Eden in the world of taste ;
And flowers and fruits the grateful garden crowned,
And human nature dignified the ground.

Here sunk *his* strength ; to animate the whole
Another's power must breathe THE LIVING SOUL.
FENNELL ! for him *thy* efforts have prevailed,
And gained for SHAKESPEARE where HIMSELF had failed !
MACBETH had still, within his page, 'tis true,
Instructed some, perhaps — th' attentive few ;
But like the fated writing on the wall,
That told Chaldea's monarch of his fall,
By most unheeded, had enticed in vain
From the rich banquet, and the mirth profane ;
Had not a moving hand — that *all* might see,
Beckoned to *all* — itself a prodigy !
Pointing alike the menace and the sign,
The acting muscles lived along the line,
Traced each strong character in deepest dye,
And forced the warning on the startled eye !

'Tis hence that WOLSEY proves, by thee applied,
A living lesson on th' effects of pride.
Hence HAMLET's anguish answering anguish found ;
And hence the night by high deserving crowned,
When public plaudit told the ear of Fame,
That ROMEO was — perfection's other name !

Ere thy example gave our actors law,—
Remembrance, aid their portraitures to draw !
Our lovers paid their vows at beauty's shrine,
With smirking simper, or with whimpering whine.

Our heroes, quick to desperation driven,
With ceaseless storm besieged both earth and heaven.
Our villains, *never such a dangerous clan!*
Looked dark, talked sentiment, and — killed their man.

Love, shown by *thee*, is tenderness sublimed,
The condescension of the loftiest mind.
'Tis Jove, who bending o'er his Juno's charms,
Smooths his dark brow, and spreads his mighty arms;
With fondness wins whom majesty had awed,
And is at once, the lover and the god!

If memory e'er disturb the spirit's rest,
Or earthly honors please th' immortal's breast;
Should Percy's* soul recall that tort'ring hour,
When from its frame 'twas forced by Monmouth's power,
Some balmy solace for the wound renewed,
Had soothed its pangs, could he thy powers have viewed;
When beams of glory round thy Hotspur shone,
That Scotia's chieftain had not scorned to own.

Thy villain — hold! No villain can we see;
E'en Zanga wins us, when performed by thee!
Moved by *thy* plaints of his disastrous fate,
We melt in pity o'er the wretch we hate;
The rising curse is smothered on his tomb,
And hell implored to mitigate his doom.

* I do not know that this character has been personated by Mr. F. on the stage. To those parts of it given in his recitations, the remarks equally apply.

And shall the minstrel cease these feeble lays,
 Nor touch one chord, that yields thee sweeter praise ?
 That says,— whene'er confessed to public sight,
 Thou play'st some motley hero of the night,—
 Where lights and shades of good and ill combine —
Native the virtue ; foreign is the crime.
 Not in *thy acts* the critic-eye can trace
 The *private failings* of the Thespian race ;
 Nor cynic-voice the contrast rude proclaim
 Of mimic honor, and of real shame.
 Whate'er of greatness marks thy scenic strife,
 'Tis thy best praise — *to copy from the life.*
 Still well-sustained thy arduous part hath been
 Through all the shiftings of its various scene.
 When dark Misfortune's gathered clouds were spread,
 And winds and thunders roared around thy head,
 Like thine own LEAR, erect th' unshrinking form
 Met the sharp lightning, and sustained the storm.

Still strict to virtue's as the drama's laws,
 O be thy meed, thine own and Heaven's applause !
 So while the *actor* “ bids the reign commence,
 Of rescued nature and reviving sense,”
 The *man* shall aid the efforts of the sage
 To mend the morals of a miscreant age !

VENONI.

LINES,

ON THE DEATH OF MRS. WARREN, FORMERLY MRS. MERRY, OF THE
LONDON THEATRE.

[1808.]

SHALL Belvidera's voice no more
Lend to the muse its peerless aid,
That erst on Albion's ingrate shore,
Soothed Otway's discontented shade ?

She, to no single soil confined,
Sought in our climes extended fame ;
The wreaths of either world entwined,
And taught both continents her name.

Nor, of those strains that crowds have hailed,
Small is the praise, nor light the gain ;
Clio can boast, such sounds prevailed,
When Faith and Freedom prayed in vain.

Such notes the Mantuan minstrel owns,
Long lured his Trojan from the main ;

And bleeding Arria in such tones,
Assured her lord she "felt not pain."

Such notes, in Rome's delirious days,
Could liberty and laws restore ;
Could bid "be still" sedition's waves,
And faction's whirlwind cease to roar.

'Twas by such suasive sounds inspired,
The matrons pressed the hostile field ;
The Volscian hosts amazed retired ;
The proud Patrician learned to yield.

Such powers, oh had Calphurnia known,
Great Julius all unharmed had stood !
No senate-walls beheld his doom,
Nor Pompey's marble drank his blood !

For thee — though born to happier times,
And gentler tasks than these endured,
Thy voice might oft prevent those crimes
Which e'en thy voice could scarce have cured.

Although no civic aim was there,
Yet not in vain that voice was given,
Which often as it blessed the air,
Informed us what was heard in heaven !

Sure, when renewed, thy powers shall rise,
To hymn before th' empyreal throne,
Angels shall start in wild surprise,
To hear a note so like their own !

O C C A S I O N A L O D E .

FIRST of all created things,
God's eldest born, O tell me, Time !
E'er since within that ear of thine,
Drawn by those steeds, whose speed divine,
Through ev'ry age and ev'ry clime,
Nor pause nor rest has known ;
'Mongst all the scenes long since gone by,
Since first thou op'd'st thy closeless eye,
Did its scared glances ever rest
Upon a vision so unblest,
So fearful as our own ?

If thus thou start'st in wild affright
At what thyself hast brought to light,
O yet relent ! nor still unclose
New volumes vast of human woes.
Thy bright and bounteous brother, yonder Sun,
Whose course coeval still with thine doth run,
Sick'ning at the sights unholy,
Frightful crime, and frantic folly,

By thee, presumptuous! with delight
Forced upon his awful sight,
Abandons half his regal right,
And yields the hated world to Night.
And e'en when through the honored day
He still benignly deigns to sway,
High o'er th' horizon prints his burnish'd tread,
Oft calls his clouds,
With sable shrouds,
To hide his glorious head!

And Luna, of yet purer view,
His sister and his regent too,
Beneath whose mild and sacred reign
Thou darest display thy deeds profane,
Pale and appalled, has frowned her fears,
Or veiled her brightness in her tears.
While all her starry court, attendant near,
Only glance, and disappear.

But Thou, relentless! not in thee
These horrors wake humanity:
Though Sun, and Moon, and Stars combin'd,
Ne'er did it change thy fatal mind,
Nor e'er thy wayward steps retrace,
Nor e'er restrain thy courser's race,

Nor e'er efface the blood thou'd'st shed,
Nor raise to life the murdered dead.

Is't not enough, thou spoiler, tell !
That, subject to thy stern behest,

The might of ancient empire fell,
And sunk to drear and endless rest ?

Fallen is the Roman eagle's flight,
The Grecian glory sunk in night ;

And prostrate arts and arms no more withstand ;
Those own thy Vandal flame, and these thy conq'ring hand.
Then be destruction's sable banner furled,
Nor wave its shadows o'er the modern world !

In vain the prayer. Still opens wide,
Renewed each former tragic scene
Of Time's dark drama ; while beside
Grief and Despair their vigils keep ;
And Mem'ry only lives to weep
The mould'ring dust of WHAT HAS BEEN.
How nameless now the once famed earth,
That gave to Kosciusco birth,
The pillared realm that proudly stood,
Propped by his worth, cemented by his blood.

As towers the lion of the wood
O'er all surrounding living things,
So, 'mid the herd of vulgar kings,
The dauntless DALECARLIAN stood.

“ Pillowed by flint, by damps enclosed,”
Upon the mine’s cold lap reposed,
Yet firm he followed freedom’s plan ;
“ Dared with eternal Night reside,
“ And threw inclemency aside,”
Conq’ror of Nature as of Man !
And earn’d by toils unknown before,
Of blood and death, the crown he wore ;
That radiant crown, whose flood of light
Illumined once a nation’s sight,
Spirit of Vasa ! this its doom ?
Gleams in a dungeon’s living tomb !

Where’er the frightened mind can fly,
But nearer ruins meet her eye.
Ah ! not Arcadia’s pictured scene
Could more the poet’s dream engage,
Nor manners more befitting seem
The vision of a golden age,
Than where the chamois loved to roam
Through old Helvetia’s rugged home ;
Where Uri’s echoes loved to swell
To kindred rocks the name of Tell ;
And past’ral girls and rustic swains,
Were simple as their native plains.
Nor mild alone, but bold, the mind,
The soldier and the shepherd joined ;

The Roman heraldry restored ;
 The crook was quartered with the sword.
 Their seed-time cheerful labor stored ;
 Plenty piled their vintage board ;
 Peace loved their daily fold to keep ;
 Contentment tranquillized their sleep ;
 Till through those *giant guards of stone*,*
 Where Freedom fixed her “mountain-throne,”
 Battle’s blood-hounds forced their way
 And made the *Human Flock* their prey !

Is it Fact, or Fancy tells,
 That now another mandate’s gone ?
 Hark, e’en now those fated wheels
 Roll the rapid ruin on !
 Lo, where the generous and the good,
 The heart to feel, the hand to dare ;
 Iberia pours her noblest blood,
 Iberia lifts her holiest prayer !
 The while from all her rocks and vales
 Her peasant-bands by thousands rise ;
 Their altar is their native plains,
 Themselves, the willing sacrifice.
 While HE, the “strangest birth of time,”
 Red with gore, and grim with crime,

* The Alps.

Whose fate more prodigies attend,
And in whose course more terrors blend,
And o'er whose birth more portents lower,
Than ever crowned,
In lore renowned,
The Macedonian's natal hour !

Now here, now there, he takes his stand,
The 'stablish'd earth his footsteps jar ;
Goads to the fight his vassal-band,
While ebbs or flows, at his command,
The torrent of the war !

Could the bard, whose powers sublime
Scaled the heights of epic glory,
And rendered in immortal rhyme
Of Rome's disgrace the blushing story ;
Where, formed of treason and of woes,
Pharsalia's gory genius rose ;
Might he again
Renew the strain,
That once his truant Muse had charmed,
Each foreign tone
Unwak'd had lain ;
And patriot Spain,
And Spain alone
The Spaniard's patriot heart had warmed !

Then had the chords proclaimed no more
His deeds, *his* death renowned of yore ;
Who,* when each ling'ring hope was slain,
And Freedom fought with Fate in vain,
Lone in the city, 'reft of all,
While Usurpation stormed the wall,
The tyrant's entrance scorned to see,
But died with dying Liberty.

Those chords had raised the local strain ;
That bard a filial flight had ta'en ;
Forgot all else ; the ancient past,
Thick in oblivion's mists o'ercast,
Or past and present both combined
Within the graspings of his mind ;
In what now is, viewed what hath been ;
The dead within the living seen :
Owned transmigration's strange control,
In Spaniards owned the *Cato-soul* ;
And wailed in tones of martial grief,
The valiant band and hero-chief,
Who shared in Saragossa's doom,
And made *their Utica* their tomb.

Bright be the am'ranth of their fame !
May Palafox a Lucan claim !

* The younger Cato.

That bard no more had filled his rhymes
 With Cæsar's greatness, Cæsar's crimes ;
 Another Cæsar waked the string,
 Alike usurper, traitor, king.
 Another Cæsar ? rashly said !
 Forgive the falsehood, mighty shade !
 'Mong'st Julius' treasons, still we know
 The faithful friend, the gen'rous foe ;
 And even enmity * could see
 Some virtues of humanity.

But thou ! by what accursed name
 Shall we denote thy features here ?
 In records of infernal Fame
 Where shall we find thy black compeer ?
 Thou, whose perfidious might of mind
 Nor Pity moves, nor faith can bind ;
 Whose friends, whose followers vainly crave
 That trust which should reward the brave ;
 Whose foes, 'mid tenfold War's alarms,
 Dread more thy treachery than thine arms.
 The Ishmaelite, 'mid deserts bred,
 Who robs at last whom first he fed,

* " His enemies confess
 The virtues of humanity are Cæsar's."
 ADDISON'S CATO.

The midnight murd'rer of the guest
With whom he shared the morning's feast,
This Arab wretch, compared with thee,
Is honor and humanity !

And shall that proud, that ancient land,
In treasure rich, in pageant grand,
Land of romance, where sprang of old
Adventures strange and champions bold,
Of holy faith and gallant fight,
And bannered hall, and armored knight,
And tournament, and minstrelsy,
The NATIVE LAND OF CHIVALRY !
Shall all these "blushing honors" bloom
For Corsica's detested son ?
These ancient worthies own his sway,
The upstart fiend of yesterday ?
O, for the kingly sword and shield
That once the victor monarch sped,
What time from Pavia's trophied field
The royal Frank was captive led !
May Charles's laurels, gained for you,
Ne'er, Spaniards, on your brows expire ;
Nor the degenerate sons subdue
The conq'rors of their nobler sire.

None higher 'mid the zodiac line
Of sovereigns and of saints you claim,
Than fair Castilia's star could shine,
And brighten down the sky of fame.
Wise, magnanimous, refined,
Accomplished friend of human kind,
Who first the Genoese sail unfurled,
The mighty mother of an infant world,
Illustrious Isabel ! Shall thine,
Thy children, kneel at Gallia's shrine ?
No : rise, thou venerated shade,
In heaven's own armor bright arrayed,
Like Pallas to her Grecian band ;
Nerve ev'ry heart and ev'ry hand ;
Pervious or not to mortal sight,
Still guard thy gallant offspring's right,
Display thine \mathcal{A} egis from afar,
And lend a thunderbolt to war !

God of battles ! from thy throne,
God of vengeance, aid their cause !
Make it, conq'ring one, thine own !
'Tis faith, and liberty, and laws.
'Tis for these they pour their blood :
The cause of man — the cause of God !

Not now avenge, all-righteous power,
Peruvia's red and ruined hour ;
Nor mangled Montezuma's head ;
Nor Guatimozin's burning bed ;
Nor give the guiltless up to fate,
For Cortez' crimes, Pizarro's hate !
Thou, who behold'st, enthroned afar,
Beyond the vision of the keenest star,
Far through creation's ample round,
The universe's utmost bound ;
Where war in other shape appears,
The destined plague of other spheres ;
Other Napoleons arise
To stain the earth and cloud the skies ;
And other realms in martial ranks succeed,
Fight like Iberians, like Iberians bleed !

If an end is e'er designed
The dire destroyers of mankind ;
O, be some seraphim assigned,
To breathe it to the patriot mind !
What Brutus, bright in arms arrayed,
What Cordè bares the righteous blade ?
Or if the vengeance, not our own,
Be sacred to *thy* arm alone ;
When shall be signed the blest release,
And wearied worlds refreshed with peace !

O could the muse but dare to rise
Far o'er these low and clouded skies,
Above the threefold heaven to soar,
And in thy very sight implore !
In vain. While angels veil them there,
While faith half fears to lift her prayer,
The glance profane *shall fancy* dare ?
Yet there around, a fearful band,
Thy ministers of vengeance stand.
Lo, at thy bidding stalks the storm ;
The lightning takes a local form ;
The floods erect their hydra head ;
The pestilence forsakes his bed ;
Intolerable light appears to wait ;
And far-off darkness stands in awful state !

For thee, O time !
If still thou speed'st thy march of crime,
'Gainst all that's beauteous or sublime ;
Still prov'st thyself the sworn ally,
And author of mortality ;
Infuriate earth, too long supine,
Whilst demon-like thou lov'st to ride,
Ending every work beside,
Shall live to see the end of thine,
Her great revenge shall see !

By prayer shall move th' Almighty power
To antedate that final hour,
When the archangel firm shall stand,
Upon the ocean and the land ;
His crown a radiant rainbow sphere,
His echoes seven-fold thunders near,
The last dread fiat shall proclaim :
Shall swear by *His* tremendous name,
Who formed the earth, the heavens, and sea,
TIME shall no longer be !

TO CHEERFULNESS.

[1810.]

GODDESS of the playful mien !
Goddess of the pleasant scene !
Of Innocence and Peace the friend,
Obedient to my call attend !

Come, from care and languor free,
Make thy blest abode with me !
Grant me all thy magic power
To beguile the dreary hour ;

For thou canst blunt misfortune's fangs,
And cheat e'en anguish of its pangs ;

Then come, from care and languor free,
Make thy blest abode with me !
Powerful Goddess steel my heart,
Firm t' encounter Envy's dart.

In fortune's smiles or frowns the same,
If free from all deserved blame.

Then come, &c.

Heightener of Prosperity !
Soother of Adversity !
Thou canst bless alike all hours,
And make every pleasure ours ;
Then come, &c.

Come, ever welcome to my heart,
Come, and from it ne'er depart ;
Since every station thou canst bless,
With peace, if not with happiness :
Come, &c.

If flowers and fragrance are not found,
In every path of life's dull round ;
Yet with *the* buds and blossoms crowned
We tread as on enchanted ground.

Then come, &c.

Should Heaven not grant my ev'ry claim,
A thousand blessings still remain ;
And with *thy* aid, I yet may find
Large comforts in an active mind.

Come then, &c.

Living, I'll confess thy power,
And love thee e'en in life's last hour;
When Death, dread conqueror, shall invade,
And every charm of life shall fade,
Smiling, his entrance may I see,
Upheld by Innocence and thee!

Come, then, from care and languor free,
EVER make thy home with me !

A HYMN, FOR FIRST OF MAY.

[1809.]

Lo ! all the waste of Winter's past ;
The darkened sky, the ocean's roar;
No more is heard the rising blast,
The icy fetters bind no more.

Lord of the seasons ! may we raise
Unblamed, the notes of worship here ?
And honest hearts and cheerful praise
Welcome the seed-time of the year.

The simplest herb, the meanest flower,
Both to their several purpose tend ;
Each insect lives its little hour,
Each worm fulfils its destined end.

Then even such as we may dare
To ask those aids, enabling man
Within some small degree to bear
His part in thine eternal plan.

Not of the humblest be it said,
They ceased to join the social strife,
While air we breathe and earth we tread
Are full of motion, order, life !

For knowledge, plenty, peace bestowed,
For life preserved and health enjoyed,
That here no midnight plague has come
Nor noonday pestilence destroyed !

Supreme Protector of mankind !
To Thee may we our praise express ;
And next, to those on earth assigned
Thy chosen instruments to bless.

O, guide us o'er life's wintry sphere,
And through its closing shadows bring
To know in Heaven's eternal year,
Another and a brighter Spring !

A PETITION.

[1809.]

I ASK not pomp, I ask not power,
Thou Giver of all gifts to man !
Nor fickle Fortune's golden shower,
Nor life beyond the common span.

Grant me a heart to good inclined,
That gift all other gifts above,—
An active hand, a liberal mind,
The hearts and lives of those I love !

And O, forbid that e'er again,
With bleeding heart and weeping eye.
I mingle with the mourning train,
Where Friendship's funeral passes by !

Spare me but that, Almighty Sire !
All other blessings I'd resign ;
Let not its flame of life expire,
But last beyond the date of mine !

Should toil and want be still my share,
And disappointment and disease,
Still more my wasted form impair,
And wrench my hold from peace or ease !

If never mine to know the joy
To draw Detraction's poisoned dart,
The power of penury to destroy,
And cheer the stranger's desert heart !

Yet may not merely selfishness
Exhaust my wishes or my fears ;
May hardened guilt receive my prayers,
And misery ever have my tears !

And still, let weal or woe betide,
May that fraternal One be nigh,
Who rose and ripened by my side,
With whom I've lived — for whom I'd die !

Then give — nor dare I ask for more —
A righteous life, a tranquil end ;
Till raised to join, when these are o'er,
My Heavenly Guide — my earthly Friend.

ANOTHER “CASTLE IN THE AIR.”

TO MARY.

[1809.]

“ To me, like Phidias, were it given
To form from clay the man sublime,
And like Prometheus, steal from heaven
The animating spark divine ! ”
Thus once in rhapsody you cried ;
As for complexion, form, and air,
No matter what, if *thought* preside,
And fire and feeling mantle there.
Deep on the tablets of his mind
Be learning, science, taste impressed ;
Let piety a refuge find
Within the foldings of his breast ;
Let him have suffered much ; since we,
Alas ! are early doomed to know
All human virtue we can see
Is only perfected through woe.

Purer the ensuing breeze we find
When whirlwinds first the skies deform,
And hardier grows the mountain hind
Bleaching beneath the wint'ry storm ;
But, above all, may heaven impart
That talent which completes the whole —
The finest and the rarest art —
To analyze a woman's soul.
Woman — that happy, wretched being,
Of causeless smile, of nameless sigh,
So oft whose joys unbidden spring,
So oft who weeps, she knows not why !
Her piteous griefs, her joys so gay,
All that afflicts and all that cheers ;
All her erratic fancy's play,
Her flutt'ring hopes, her trembling fears —
With passions chastened, not subdued,
Let dull inaction stupid reign ;
Be his the ardor of the good,
Their loftier thought and nobler aim.
Firm as the towering bird of Jove,
The mightiest shocks of life to bear ;
Yet gentle as the captive dove,
In social suffering to share.

If such there be, to such alone
Would I thy worth, beloved, resign ;
Secure, each bliss that time had known
Would consummate a lot like thine.
But if this gilded human scheme
Be but the pageant of the brain,
Of such slight "stuff as forms our dream,"
Which waking we must seek in vain,
Each gift of nature and of art
Still lives within thyself enshrined ;
Thine are the blossoms of the heart,
And thine the scions of the mind ;
And if the matchless wreath shall blend
With foliage other than its own,
Or destined not its sweets to lend,
Shall flourish for thyself alone,
Still cultivate the plants with care ;
From weeds, from thorns, oh, keep them free !
Till ripened for a purer air,
They bloom in immortality !

TO SARAH, COUNTESS OF RUMFORD.

WRITTEN BY REQUEST, JANUARY, 1811.

THE winds that breathe our mansions round,
So long and loud that Fancy's ear
Oft hears in each distressful sound
The groanings of the dying year—
These winds, though harsh their notes we deem,
Ere long shall sweep a softer string ;
E'en now their tones but preludes seem
To merrier music from the spring.
That spring, as wont, a frolic fair,
Whene'er she treads our hills again,
Shall tempt thy truant steps to dare
Once more the perils of the main.
What powerful, what resistless hand
Beckons thee o'er a waste of wave,
Where other hills o'ertop the land,
Whose borders other waters lave ?

Thy SIRE's ? Ah, then no longer fail !
Cheer *him*, who cheers a grateful age ;
And winged by duty, fly to hail
At once the father and the sage !
Oft the false lights that *learning* shows,
But lead the 'wilder'd wretch astray ;
The meteor, GENIUS, often glows
Only to dazzle or dismay.
A nobler image pictures him ;
(No baleful star in vengeance hurled ;)
The CENTRAL ORB, whose blessed beam
Not only lights but warms the world.
Go then ! — yet ah, could wish of mine
Embody'd wait upon thy will,
'T would cause the sweetest suns to shine,
And bid the boist'rous gales be still !
Be thine the tributary hours
That Judgment rules, that Taste refines ;
May Art present her fruits and flowers,
And Science ope her thousand mines.
Farewell ! yet one request remains :
When Gallia's gayer scenes are shown,
Forget not, 'mid her fairy plains,
The modest merits of thine own.

The humble pleasures deck our soil —
Pleasures which, simple as they seem,
Have ever mocked the worldling's toil,
And fled the guilty, gilded scene.
Wearied with flights the world around,
(Whilst war's red deluge drowns the rest,)
The doves of Peace at length have found
Within our ark a sheltered nest.
Here enterprise and toil engage,
And friendship firm, and awful truth.
Here kindness cheers the frost of age,
And counsel checks the fire of youth.
These are our boast — nor here alone
The *social graces* love to dwell;
But hallowed still in every home,
The hermit-virtues find a cell.
Here Temp'rance rules our vain desires,
Toil lifts — Contentment soothes the mind,
And holy Hope to heaven aspires,
And leaves the less'ning world behind.

Oh, love this land! where'er thou art,
Where'er thy wand'ring feet may roam,
Still hither turn thy constant heart,
And fondly, proudly, own its HOME!

A N E P I T A P H

ON MRS. MARY H. SHAW, DAUGHTER OF JUDGE HOWEL, OF PROVIDENCE.

[1811.]

HERE sleep the charities of heart combined,
To meliorate the energies of mind ;
Where purest wit and liveliest fancy graced,
And reason wore the ornaments of taste.
With her, enthusiast feeling's warmest flame
Consumed the selfish in the social aim ;
Hers the firm faith that calmed the flutt'ring breath,
And hers the holy hope that lived in death !
Mother of babes, with every kindred grace,
And equal parent of an orphan race,
Each duty, bliss of life, within her call,
She felt, fulfilled, enjoyed, resigned them all !
No fav'rite virtue sparkled in her breast
With fatal brightness, to eclipse the rest ;

Like yon white arch, whose stars unite as one,
Her circling virtues blended — each a sun.
When ruined health found aid and effort vain,
Nobly she triumphed o'er protracted pain,
And sweetly slumbered, till the just shall rise,
And God pronounce her welcome to the skies!

YESTERDAY, TO-DAY, TO-MORROW.

[1810.]

ON Hallow Eve, as late I lay,
And vagrant Fancy chose to stray,
She met the Sisters three
Who realize the tales of yore,
Of fabled Fates in ancient lore,
Who held within their stern decree
What was, what is, and what shall be.

But *theirs* was but fictitious power,
The idol of an augur's hour,
Mythology's fantastic scheme,
The pagan's pageant, poet's dream ;
Far diff'rent force to those is given
Whom late I met on Hallow Even,
On whom depends, in very truth,
All vice or virtue, joy or ruth,
That man can e'er befall ;

All of the scenes that *Life* we call,
All that makes death invite — appall,
All that in Heaven can hope enthrall,
Or Hell affright withal !

The *elder* was of pensive air,
With sable eyes and jetty hair,
And dark brow, darker tinged with care,
That neither joy nor peace could share.

And to the world, she seemed to quit
With ever swift-retreating feet,
Small notice could she spare ;
Yet now and then a glance was lent
To mark the steps, which way they bent,
Of her young sister, called To-DAY ;
But as those steps would constant stray,
And reckless take the downward path,
Then, “more in sorrow than in wrath,”
She turned her head away.

Slow she receded from my sight,
To distant domes of shadowy night,
To reach the spot where, shrouded, stood
Her family, “beyond the flood ;”
Nor to my aching voice or eye,
Or looked regard or deigned reply ;

But still that saintly form and mien,
Solemn though mild, though sad serene,
Seemed an embodied voice, to say
Mortal! my name is YESTERDAY!

The second of the kindred race
Received from heaven a livelier grace ;
With health's own rose her cheek was dyed,
Bright was her hazel eye,
And graceful activeness supplied
The place of majesty.

But truly active while she seemed,
What were her aims no soul could guess ;
For still, in Wisdom's view, 'twere deemed
But busy idleness.

In careless guise she roamed around,
And picked her pebbles from the ground,
And when attained the worthless store
She flung them by and gathered more ;
And all her actions, as her thought,
Life's sunny surface only sought,
Nor ever searched the secret springs
That move beneath the face of things,

Though latent pearls beneath the sand
Awaited but her seeking hand,
And sleeping diamonds seemed to say —
Give us the sun's awakening ray !

Thus reckless though she roved, yet near
Methought I traced the frequent tear ;
And that she noted not the care
Or sorrows of the elder Fair,
Was not that (captious or severe)
She ceased to deem that sister dear,
But that her fond and eager sight,
(That else its glance had backward turned,
 And taught it there to rest,)
Now with extatic ardor burned,
And darted onward on its light,
Where, seeming just from Ida's height,
As Hebe young, as Venus bright,
 To-MORROW stood confessed !

There in a vista through the shade
Above whose arch the sunbeams played,
The fairest form that e'er was seen
Is pranking o'er the dewy green,
Peeping each mazy walk between,
Or playfully intent to screen

That dazzling hair and angel mien
Amid the boughs that intervene ;
Those amber ringlets far behind
Wave in the sportive western wind,
And ever 'mid the green leaves seen,
Sparkle like fairy-light between.
But with her mantle's hues so fair
What tints of Nature could compare ?
'Twas April's once — so poets say —
But Proteus stole the robe for May,
And Iris tinged it with her ray,
And Hope had borrowed from the skies
The colors for those azure eyes,
Whose tempered radiance, softened dyes,
Allured but not fatigued the sight ;
And seemed a sunny orb to view,
Wreathed by a cloud of faintest blue,
That swam in liquid light !

O, matchless maid ! forever hail !
Forever thus thy power prevail ;
Each former inspiration o'er,
On other forms I gaze no more,
Nor wonder that the world agree
To slight thy sisters — worship *thee*.

For sure, without thy pitying power,
The first might prove the final hour ;
And each his fettered life would free,
But for the blissful hope of thee.
As clouds the present scene o'ercast,
And Memory mourns the buried past,
The future, shown by thee, appears
Of fadeless joys and endless years.
Thou bath'st the Christian's aching eye
With dews from a celestial sky ;
Thou calm'st the poet's troubled mind,
Whisp'ring "the world will yet be kind ;"
Then bid'st before the patriot's soul
Visions of civic glory roll,
When ransomed realms shall give to fame
His laurelled bust, his paeanned name !

Fairest and best, accept the song !
To thee my lays—myself belong.
All other thoughts I'd tell to flee,
And consecrate my soul to thee ;
All other cherished loves depart,
Thou, only thou, shalt rule my heart !

The following lines were originally entitled, "An Inscription for a Monument at Richmond." The reflections, however, suggested by the subject, having extended beyond the limits usually allowed to inscriptive composition, they are now offered without a name, and may be supposed the natural effusions of every mind, on contemplating the scene of that memorable conflagration.

[1812.]

PILGRIM, whose pious steps have led thee on,
To pause and ponder at this sacred shrine,
Where relics rest, of sanctifying power
Greater than Mecca or Loretto knew,
Lo! this the spot, where, at the very hour
Of social sentiment, of scenic show,*
When eye met eye participant of pleasure,
As passed the varied forms of mimic life,
E'en at an hour like this, came Death's dread angel,
Shrouding his mystic form in smoke and flame,
And still dilating, till his presence filled
Rapid the dome — through blazing fires — anon
Through deepest darkness — here his mighty arms
Grasped close his victims !

* Conflagration of the Richmond Theatre.

Pilgrim, no common sigh,
 No vulgar tear! Profane not dust like this
 With aught but purest griefs, with holiest sorrows,
 Meet for the good, the great, the brave, the fair!
 How much of worth — worth greatest at the last!
 If e'er thy heart throbbed high at the remembrance
 Of him who bore from Illion's heaven-doomed walls
 And smoking battlements his aged sire;
 Or her* who sought, in Gallia's guilty hour,
 Death with the friend she loved; or, later yet,
 The glorious Scot,† whose daring aid preserved,
 Spite of the searching flames of civil war,
 Hundreds of hearts — who shall attest his praise
 In earth and heaven! O, if thy spirit stirred
 At such exploits, look *here*, and it shall own
 Kindred pulsations. Here Affection proved
 As proud a triumph; undismayed at danger;
 Strong even as death, and dearer far than life,
 Embraced the fiery ordeal of her faith.
 Think on't; th' admiring thought shall flush thy cheek
 And dry the dews of Pity. Soothe thee, too,
 To think what they were spared! Not theirs to totter
 Unto the utmost verge of useless life,
 And tremble on the brink, dreading to go,
 Yet unallowed to stay. Not theirs to feel

* Princess de Lamballe.

† Duncan M'Intosh.

Ling'ring disease — that slow but certain poison,
Perpetual martyrdom, incessant death ;
Nor, what were even worse, if worse can be,
To witness such decay — the wasted form,
The ruined intellect, the fevered brain,
The fitful hectic of the cheek, succeeded
By pallid hollowness ; and O ! the eyes
That roll their wild dilated orbs around,
Imploring aid, till the beholder's heart
Hails with a kind of horrid hope the hour
That ends the being which was best beloved !
God, of his mercy, spared them sights like these,
And gave their final moment one brief pang —
That pang the first and last. “ These died together,
Happy in ruin, undivorced by death.”
Their love so powerful was not left to dull
On earth's low cares its fervors, but preferred
To where its essence shall be more sublimed —
Its extacy exhaustless. And if e'er,
Stranger, the wretched havoc which the passions
Too often make, has pierced thy pride of nature,
'Twill heal thy heart to know they here asserted
Their native rank, primeval destination,
The firm allies and generous guards of virtue.

'Twill raise thy hopes of man, and lift thy prayer
To Him, who, when he formed our beings mortal,
Made them immortal, too — that be thy call
As sudden, thou mayst breast thee to the shock,
And buffet Fate as greatly, gallantly,
As those who perished here !

S T A N Z A S

COMMEMORATIVE OF CHARLES B. BROWN, OF PHILADELPHIA, AUTHOR OF
“WIELAND,” “CIMOND,” “ARTHUR MERVYN,” ETC.

[1810.]

COLUMBIA ! mourn thy buried son —
Fancy's beloved, the Muses' heir ;
Mourn him whose course too soon was run ;
Mourn him, alas ! thou ill canst spare.

Mourn thou of whom the tale of old,
So oft, so tauntingly is told,
That all thy earth-born sons refuse
Alliance with the heavenly muse ;

That though, o'er many a warrior's grave,
Thou bidst the trophied banner wave,
And rescued realms shall give to fame
The laurelled bust, the pœanéd name.

And though thou boast on glory's scroll
Of patriot worth a splendid roll ;
Their wealth, the gain of equal laws,
Their bribe, the boon of self applause ;

And though thy ocean-hero's name
Revived the ancient Decian claim ;
While e'en the Turk can point and tell
Where Somers, Wadsworth, Israel fell ;

Yet of the sacred sons of song,
How far too few to thee belong ;
With Pallas' strength, with Hermes' fire,
Lovers of letters or the lyre.

Though nature with unsparing hand,
Has scattered round thy favored land
Those gifts that prompt th' aspiring aim,
And fan the latent spark to flame;

Such awful shade of black'ning woods,
Such roaring voice of giant floods,
Cliffs which the dizzied eagles flee,
And cat'racts tumbling to the sea ;

That in this wild and lone retreat,
Great Collins might have fixed his seat ;
Called Horror from the mountain's brow,
Or Danger from the deeps below !

And then, for those of milder mood,
Heedless of forest, rock, or flood,
Here too are found, the pebbly rill,
The honied vale, the breezy hill ;

Gay fields bedecked with golden grain ;
Rich orchards, bending o'er the plain,
Where Sydney's fairy pen had failed,
Or Mantuan Maro's muse had hailed ;

Yet 'midst this luxury of scene,
These varied charms, this graceful mien,
Canst thou no hearts, no voices raise,
Those charms to feel, those charms to praise ?

Then mourn thy Brown ! whose ardent mind
Aonian worship early joined ;
Who chose his shrine from classic bowers,
His lares from the studious hours.

Amid the busy hum of men,
He plied the strong descriptive pen,
And sketched whate'er within, around,
In motley vision could be found.

He watched of livid death the tread,
And marked each fated shaft that sped ;
He crossed destruction's midnight way,
And plagues that waste in open day.*

Nor chiefly here his powers were shown ;
Each lighter theme he made his own ;
As Folly's different freaks engage
The serious or the smiling sage.

Where'er his lucid colors glow,
Manners and life the portrait know ;
And through the canvass, fiction deemed,
Reality's bold features gleamed.

Nor only his the skill to scan
The outward acts of varied man ;
But his was nature's clue, to wind
Through mazes of the heart and mind.

* Arthur Mervyn.

The moral painter well portrayed,
The cause of each effect surveyed ;
And breathed upon the lifeless page
The informing soul, the “ noble rage.”

If gifts like these might well demand
The gen’rous tear, the votive hand,
E’en where such gifts full wide prevail,
In Latium’s porch or Arno’s vale ;

Then mourn, my country ! mourn thy son —
Fancy’s beloved, the Muses’ heir ;
Mourn him whose course so soon was run,
Mourn him, alas ! thou ill canst spare.

STANZAS.

THE writer of the following stanzas was importuned by a friend, some time since, to supply the deficiencies of the "Ode on the Passions." It was replied that such an undertaking would resemble the attempt of a journeyman carpenter to finish a statue of Praxiteles. The request, however, being renewed, was so far effectual as to elicit this fragment; not as a presumptuous endeavor to add anything to Collins's Ode, but as an humble distant effort, to imitate the *character* of that celebrated production.

[1810.]

BEHOLD yon monstrous shape appear !
The Gorgon head, the Danaides' heart ;
 Their stings the curling serpents rear,
While e'en Ambition owns a fear,
 And Hope and Joy depart.
'T was Envy dared the bower invade,
And round with curious eye surveyed,
To where the Lesbian lyre was laid,
Buried beneath its myrtle shade ;
That lyre, whose strains so sweet, so strong,
To Sappho's touch alone belong ;

That lyre, whose strains so strong, so sweet,
No voice but Echo's dared repeat.
Yet this weird wretch presumed to strive
The *lyric spirit* to revive !
And emulate those sounds that stole
O'er poor Alcæus' subject soul !

Remorse approached ; his wasted frame
Feebly on trembling knees he bore ;
Alike in sorrow and in shame,
Timoleon's form he wore,
(What time, from Corinth forced to roam,
He wandered far from friends and home ;)
With gory hands he struck the lyre.
The lyre, indignant at the wrong,
Scorned to pour the soothing song ;
And harshly groaned each clotted wire,
Now first by murd'rous hand profaned,
Now first by human blood distained.
Back sprang the wretch, and called Despair
To end the strange and “solemn air ;”
While still within its banquet flies
The gnawing worm that never dies !

The next that came
With sinewy arm of fight,
And ardent, eagle-sight,
 Ambition was his name
Amid the band,
With lawless hand,
 He dared aspire
To seize famed Memnon's mystic lyre,
And struck those hallowed chords of fire,
 Long sacred to the Sun !
But when the impious deed was done,
I saw, what seemed of mortal state,
To sudden majesty dilate ;
I saw him stretch his giant form
 In shadowy length athwart the sky ;
His rocky forehead clothed in storm,
 Bloodshot his dark delirious eye.
While, at his tocsin's furious sound,
Loosened demons danced around ;
Joying 'mid the groans profound,
Of Virtues, slaughtered on the accursed ground !

A R H A P S O D Y.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY.

[1812.]

O, thou, whom we have known so long, so well,
Thou who didst hymn the Maid of Arc, and framed
Of Thalaba the wild and wondrous song,
And in later tale of Times of Old,
Remindest us of our own patriarch fathers,
The Madocs of their age, who planted here
The cross of Christ, and liberty, and peace !
Minstrel of other climes, of higher hopes,
And holier inspirations, who hast ne'er
From her high birth debased the goddess muse,
To grovel in the dirt of earthly things ;
But learned to mingle with her human tones
Some breathings of the harmonies of heaven !
Joyful to meet thee yet again, we hail
Thy last, thy loftiest lay ; nor chief we thank thee

For every form of beauty, every light
Bestowed by brilliancy, and every grace
That fancy could invent and taste dispose,
Or that creating, consummating power,
Pervading fervor, and mysterious finish,
That something occult, indefinable,
By mortals, genius named ; the parent sun
Whence all those rays proceed ; the constant fount
To feed those streams of mind, th' informing soul
Could e'er describe, whose fine and subtle nature
Seems like the aerial forms which, legends say,
Greeted the gifted eye of saint or seer,
Yet ever mocked the fond inquirer's aim
To scan their essence !

Such alone we greet not,
Since genius oft (so oft the tale is trite)
Employs its golden art to varnish Vice
And bleach Depravity, till it shall wear
The whiteness of the robes of Innocence ;
And Fancy's self forsakes her truest trade,
The lapidary for the scavenger ;
And Taste, regardful of but half her province,
Self-sentenced to a partial blindness, turns
Her notice from the semblance of perfection,
To fix its hood-winked gaze on faults alone,

And, like the owl, sees only in the night ;
Not like the eagle soars to meet the day.

Oblivion to all such ! For thee we joy
Thou hast not misapplied the gifts of God,
Nor yielded up thy powers, illustrious captives,
To grace the triumph of licentious Wit.

Once more a female is thy chosen theme,
And Kailyal lives a lesson to the sex,
How more than woman's loveliness may blend
With all of woman's worth ; with chastened love,
Magnanimous exertion, patient piety,
And pure intelligence. Lo ! from *thy* wand
Even faith, and hope, and charity, receive
Something more filial and more feminine.

Proud praise enough were this ; yet is there more :
That 'neath thy splendid Indian canopy
By fairy fingers woven, of gorgeous threads,
And gold and precious stones, thou hast enwrapped
Stupendous themes that Truth divine revealed,
And answering Reason owned — naught more sublime,
Beauteous, or useful, e'er was charactered
On Hermes' mystic pillars — Egypt's boast,
And more, Pythagoras' lesson, when the maze
Of hieroglyphic meaning awed the world !

Could Music's potent charm, as some believed,
 Have warmth to animate the slumbering dead,
 And "lap them in Elysium," second only
 To that which shall await in other worlds,
 How would the native sons of ancient India
 Unclose on thee that wondering, dubious eye,
 Where admiration wars with incredulity !
 Sons of the morning ! first born of creation !
 What would *they* think of thee — thee, one of us,
 Sprung from a later race, on whom the ends
 Of this our world has come, that thou shouldst pen
 What Varanasis' * venerable towers,
 In all their pride and plenitude of powers,
 Ere conquest spread their bloody banner o'er them,
 Or Ruin trod upon their hallowed walls,
 Could ne'er excel, though stored with ethic wisdom,
 And epic minstrelsy and sacred lore !
 For there Philosophy's Gantami † first
 Taught man to measure mind ; there Valmic hymned
 The conquering arms of heaven-descended Ruma ;
 And Calidasa and Viassa there,
 At different periods, but with powers the same,
 The Sanscrit song prolonged, of Nature's works,
 Of human woes, and sacred Crishna's ways.

* The College of Benares.

† Supposed the earliest founder of a Philosophical School.

That it should e'er be thine, of Europe born,
To sing of Asia! that Hindostan's palms
Should bloom on Albion's hills, and Brahma's Vedas
Meet unconverted eyes, yet unprofaned!
And those same brows the classic Thames had bathed,
Be laved by holy Ganges! while the lotus,
Fig-tree, and cusa, of its healing banks,
Should, with their derva's vegetable rubies,
Be painted to the life! Not truer touches,
On plane-tree arch above, or roseate carpet
Spread out beneath, were ever yet employed
When their own vale of Cashmere was the subject,
Sketched by its own Abdallah!

He, too, of thine own land, who long since found
A refuge in his final sanctuary
From regal bigotry, could thy voice reach him,
His awful shade might greet thee as a brother
In sentiment and song; that epic genius
From whom the sight of outward things was taken
By Heaven in mercy — that the orb of vision
Might totally turn inward — there concentrated
On objects else perhaps invisible,
Requiring and exhausting all its rays,
Who (like Tiresias, of prophetic fame,)
Talked with Futurity! that patriot
Poet of Paradise, whose daring eye

Explored "the living throne, the sapphire blaze,"
But, blasted with "excess of light," retired
And left to thee to compass other heavens
And other scenes of being!

Bard beloved

Of all who virtue love — revered by all
That genius reverence — Southey! if thou art
"Gentle as bard beseems," and if thy life
Be lovely as thy lay, thou wilt not scorn
This rustic wreath; albeit 'twas entwined
Beyond the western waters, where I sit
And bid the winds that wait upon their surges,
Bear it across them to thine island-home.
Thou wilt not scorn the simple leaves, though culled
From that traduced, insulted spot of earth
Of which thy contumelious brethren oft
Frame fables, full as monstrous in their kind
As e'er Munchausen knew — with all his falsehood,
Guiltless of all his wit! Not such art thou —
Surely thou art not, if as Rumor tells,
Thyself, in the high hour of hopeful youth,
Had cherished nightly visions of delight,
And day-dreams of desire, that lured thee on
To see the sister States, and painted to thee
Our frowning mountains and our laughing vales,

The countless beauties of our varied lakes,
The dim recesses of our endless woods,
Fit haunt for sylvan deities, and whispered
How sweet it were in such deep solitude,
To talk to Nature, but to think of man ;
Then thou, perchance, like Scotia's darling son,
Hadst sung our Pennsylvanian villages,
Our bold Oneidas, and our tender Gertrudes,
And sung, like him, thy listeners into tears !

Such were thy early musings ; other thoughts,
And happier, doubtless, have concurred to fix thee
On Britain's venerated shore ; yet still
Must that young thought be tenderly remembered,
Even as romantic minds are sometimes said
To cherish their first love — not that 'twas wisest,
But that 'twas earliest. If that morning dream
Still lingers to thy noon of life, remember,
And for its own dear sake, when thou shalt hear,
(As oft, alas ! thou wilt,) those gossip tales
By lazy Ignorance or inventive Spleen
Related, of the vast, the varied country
We proudly call our own, O ! then refute them,
By thy just consciousness that still this land
Has turned no adder's ear toward thy muse,
That charms so wisely ; that where'er her tones,

Mellowed by distance, o'er the waters come,
They meet a band of listeners — those who hear
With breath-suspending eagerness, and feel
With feverish interest. Be this their praise,
And sure they'll need no other! Such there are,
Who, from the centre of an honest heart,
Bless thee for ministering to the purest pleasures
That man, whilst breathing earthly atmosphere,
In this minority of being, knows ;
That of contemplating immortal verse,
In fit communion with Eternal Truth !

DUNCAN M'INTOSH.

To offer a notice of this departed philanthropist for the Christian Disciple, is to concur, it is believed, with the objects of that publication. In a mercantile community it can never be unreasonable to record an exception to the sordid spirit of accumulation ; and in a Christian country, it must always be salutary to contemplate the actual intrepidity and elevation of the Christian character, in opposition to what has been unfortunately asserted of its abjectness and pusillanimity.*

We may not be as generally apprised in this, as in our more southern capitals, that Mr. M'Intosh was at St. Domingo during the sanguinary revolution of 1793, which threatened the total extermination of the French inhabitants ; and although (as an American citizen) he might have departed in safety, and taken with him the whole of his large property, he preferred remaining and sacrificing that property, together with the interesting hopes connected with its acquirement, to the preservation of the proscribed. At every hazard he continued during eight months to freight vessels at his own expense, laden with these destitute fugitives, to the number of nine hundred men and fifteen hundred women and children. At his subsequent arrival in Philadelphia, a gold medal, a public dinner, and every demonstration of enthusiastic respect, were rendered him by the gratitude of the exiles he had saved ; *but for services like his, what are all sublunary rewards ? Remuneratio ejus cum altissimo.*

[1821.]

HAIL ! son of ancient Caledon !
Thy race is sped, thy crown is won ;
The voice Supreme thy worth must tell ;
Ours only utters “ Hail ! Farewell ! ”

* Vide Paley and Tenyns.

Oft has offended Virtue's frown
Withered the chaplets of renown ;
Struck by the lightning of her eye,
In their first blossoming they die ;
And incense, fired to rise for years,
Is quenched in her indignant tears.

Not to the just such fate is given ;
Their laurel is the growth of heaven ;
Seed, sown amid the storms of time,
Expands in that unclouded clime ;
The Virtues, guardian angels there,
Make the immortal plant their care ;
And heavenly hands its leaves suffuse
With moisture from celestial dews.
It feels the Sun's enliv'ning ray
Long ere he gilds our distant day,
And winds from primal Eden's vales,
Breathe over it their balmiest gales.

And never tree of glory there,
Has towered more fragrant, full or fair,
Than that which waves its holy flower
O'er Duncan's high immortal bower.
Thou hero of an holier flame
Than boasts the ranks of martial fame !
Though honored still that steel must be,
Which strikes for lawful liberty,

(Such as thy Wallace wont to wield,
Defender of his native field ;)
Yet happier is that course maintained,
Whose trophies are with tears unstained ;
And worthier benisons should fall
On him, above each narrower call,
Who risked his life, his wealth, his all,
With charity that knew no bound,
For strangers, on a foreign ground ;
And felt the outcast alien blend
The claims of clansman, brother, friend !
What time against their ancient foes
Dark Afric's race like demons rose,
Past wrongs with present strength conspiring,
And memory all their passions firing,
Till mad, and madd'ning all the throng,
Freedom a Fury raved along,
With garments rolled in blood ; with hand
Grasping the desolating brand ;
What voice but thine alone could dare
Breathe the forbidden word — to *spare* ?
From glens and caves the fugitive
Could look to thee alone, and live ;
Whose shelt'ring arms a rampart spread,
Stood 'twixt the living and the dead,

With angel eloquence to stay
The carnage of that direful day !

And when the shield that saved before,
From power incensed could save no more,
Thou gav'st the meed of years of toil,
To waft them to a kindlier soil.

Vain were the dungeon's terrors, * *vain*
The threatened scaffold's penal stain ;
Ah ! vain those fonder thoughts, that pressed
For mastery in thy manly breast,
And bade thee pause, nor forfeit now
The nuptial torch, the mutual vow,
The social hall, the festal dome,
The comforts of the hearth and home.

O happy in the sacrifice !
For what the suffering to the prize ?
What loss of all that earth holds dear,
In such a high and proud career ?
Let faith, prophetic faith, portray
The glories of thy rising day,
When grateful thousands shall proclaim
Their kind deliverer's honored name ;
Sires hail him, who from direst rage
Rescued the filial props of age ;

* Mr. M. was twice imprisoned, and narrowly escaped death, for his efforts in this cause.

And mothers bless the arm that stayed
From infant hearts the ruthless blade ;
While from before the mystic throne
Erst to the seer of Patmos shown,
Sublimest welcome shall accord
Thy great exemplar and thy lord,
Who onward to his own abode
Through sacrifice and suffering trode ;
Endured each earthly, heavenly loss ;
Renounced a kingdom for a cross ;
Cheerful, himself for others gave,
And lived to bless, and died to save !

INCOMPREHENSIBILITY OF GOD.

"I go forward, but he is not there ; and backward, but I cannot perceive him."

[1824.]

WHERE art Thou ? Thou Source and Support of all
That is, or seen, or felt, Thyself unseen,
Unfelt, unknown ; alas, unknowable !
I look abroad among Thy works — the sky,
Vast, distant, glorious, with its world of suns,
Life-giving earth, and ever moving main,
And speaking winds, and ask if these are Thee ?
The stars that twinkle on the eternal hills,
The restless tide's outgoing and return,
The omnipresent and deep breathing air,
Though hailed as gods of old, and only less,
Are not the Power I seek ; are *Thine*, not *Thee*.
I ask Thee from the past, if in the years
Since first intelligence could search its Source,
Or in some former, unremembered being,
(If such, perchance were mine,) did they belong to Thee ?
And next interrogate futurity,

So fondly tenanted with better things
Than e'er experience owned ; but both are mute,
And past, and future, vocal on all else,
So full of memories and fantasies,
Are deaf and speechless here ! Fatigued, I turn
From all vain parley with the elements,
And close mine eyes, and bid the thought turn inward,
From each material thing its anxious quest,
If in the stillness of the waiting soul
He may vouchsafe Himself — Spirit to Spirit !
O, Thou, at once most dreaded and desired,
Pavilioned still in darkness, wilt Thou hide Thee ?
What though the rash request be fraught with fate —
No human eye may look on Thee and live ?
Welcome the penalty ! Let that come now,
Which, soon or late, must come. For light like this
Who would not dare to die ?

Peace ! my proud aim,
And hush the wish which knows not what it asks ;
Await *His* will, who hath appointed this
With every other trial. Be that will
Done now as ever. For thy curious search
And unprepared solicitude to gaze
On Him, the Unrevealed, learn hence, instead,
To temper brightest hope with humbleness ;

Pass thy noviciate in these outer courts,
Till rent the veil no longer separating
The Holiest of all, as erst disclosing
A brighter dispensation, whose results
Ineffable, interminable, tend
E'en to the perfecting thyself, thy kind,
Till meet for that sublime beatitude,
By the firm promise of a voice from Heaven,
Pledged to the pure in heart.

LINES TO THE MEMORY OF THOMAS F. PALMER,

BURIED AT BOSTON.

[1824.]

“THOU shalt not have my bones,” the Roman said
To his ungrateful country. Then, as now,
Whoe’er put forth the patriot’s voice or arm
Incurred the patriot’s penalty — proscription,
Exile, or death. Then blush we not for thee,
Whose ashes here repose. The blush be theirs
Who doomed thee guilty for in freedom’s cause
Uttering a freeman’s voice — as Sydney erst,
And sacred Milton — doomed thee to the hulk,
And desert strand, by felons companied!
(Was not *His* doom, who spoke to free the world
From sin’s worse thraldom, to the odious tree,
With malefactors at his side?) On them,
On them the shame, albeit thine the suffering!
And meet it was, since thou wert ne’er again
To view the white cliffs of thy sea-girt Albion,

The “mighty mother,” who, like her of Colchis,*
Has sometimes slain her sons ; whose fatal ire
Had driven thee from her to the wilderness,
With brutes, and men more brutish — meet at last
To rest thee in a land where Priestly rested,
Like him a witness for the truth, like him
An exile for its sake. And be thy meed
To mix thy dust with theirs, the pilgrim sires,
Men after thine own heart, and kindred spirits,
Whom persecution banished in their day.
Even here — what time all here was but a waste,
With its fell Indian and its beast of prey —
Taking their turn before thee ! one in destiny,
Confessors of the same heroic faith,
Martyrs alike for the same righteous cause ;
Rest thee, and rise with them !

* Medea.

THE EASTERN KING AND SOUTHERN QUEEN.

(A HEBREW FABLE.)

TO MARY PRINCE TOWNSEND.

[1836.]

HE sat upon his ivory throne,
The mightiest among monarchs known,
Who raised Palmyra from the wild,
And Balbec's wond'rous fabrics piled,
 Wisest among the sage !
Through farthest Ind, whose gifted name
First on the rolls of ancient fame,
Jew, Arab, Moslem, join to claim,
 E'en to this distant age.
To him each latent cause was known,
And Nature's mysteries made his own,
Nor could a flower its incense fling,
Nor reptile creep — bird, insect, wing —
But still of each created thing,
 He knew its powers to call ;
E'en from Libanus' cedar tall
To humblest hyssop of the wall.

He sat upon his ivory throne,
And royal Balkis near him stand ;
She who proud Nilus' wave subdued,
Until his tributary tide
Had her vast reservoirs supplied,
Whence aqueduct and fountain plied,
Refreshing all her garden's side ;
She, whom the judgment trump shall raise
With Hebrew souls of Herod's days,
By bright example to condemn
That hardened race of ingrate men ;
She, high in soul as rank, with mind
Enlightened beyond woman-kind,
(Though seas and deserts spread between,)
Left Araby the Blest, to find

And prove the far-famed one.

That Fair was Sheba's potent Queen,

That prince King Solomon !

She stood the monarch's throne before,
And either hand twin garlands bore,
Where Sharon's rival roses show,
The paler and the blushing hue,
The various tribes of tulips, too,
And lilies of the golden view,
With that more modest one, that grew
Beneath the valley's shelt'ring shade,

And drooped its bashful bells e'en there,
Lest they should meet the gazer's stare,
And that one blent with either skin,
Snowy without and gold within,
Who shamed that Nature ne'er supplied
A leafy covering for its side,
Is fain its naked stem to hide
Beneath the lake's encircling tide.

There the Carnation lent its share ;
There blossomed the Narcissus fair ;
The Almond bud breathed fragrance there,
And passing all, the rich Gulnare !*
These flowers Arabia's sovereign bore,
As Judah's lord she bowed before,
And held them up to view.

“ O, live forever, glorious king !
Behold, the rural wreaths I bring
In form and tint have vied ;
But one its quickening substance drew
From Salem's soil, and sun, and dew ;
And one, with imitation true,
I and my maidens dyed !
And now, O king, consult thine eyes,
As thou art wisest of the wise,

* Name of the Pomegranate's blossom.

And tell, according to thy thought,
Which is the chaplet we have wrought,
 And which is Nature's hand ?
This boon thy handmaid to command
Asks humbly at thy royal hand,
Who, since she ne'er a suit preferred
But thou most graciously hast heard,
 Not now must ask in vain ;
And spices, richer far, and more
Than those she lately hither bore,
(Though Israel saw not such before,)
 Shall be thy royal gain."

She ceased, but still her glance confessed
The frolic feeling of her breast,
Where secret triumph, ill suppressed,
Through mimic deference shone confessed.
Ceased she, and on the ground her eye
Demurely cast, while waiting by
Stood Judah's court its monarch nigh,
Marvelling that daring dame should try
Their king's sagaciousness defy.
Awhile the monarch paused and smiled
To see his sapience half beguiled
 By woman's sprightlier wile.

"And hast thou proved this curious toil,
Queen of the South ! my skill to foil ?

Well may thy friend admire !

And frankly to thee be it known
That by no wisdom of our own
Could any difference here be shown ;
But, (as thou know'st,) thy subjects tell
That mystic call and powerful spell
Force from the spirits, at our will,
Their aid of more than mortal skill

When our behests require,
And there be tenants of the air
Who make King Solomon their care."

With that the monarch gave command,
Within the queen had fixed her stand,
That all the palace windows wide
Be opened free on every side ;
When, lo ! the insect chemists there,
Whose skill compounds the sweetest fare,
Rifling from dawn to day's full prime
Through balmiest bowers of Palestine,
Nearer and louder hum,
Till to the regal presence hall,
As conscious of its owner's call,
The revellers have come !

Following the vegetable lure,
With instinct sensitive and sure,
Past the fictitious wreath they flew,
And clustered jocund round the true,
Whilst shouts th' exultant crowd, to see
Their sovereign's ingenuity,
Who thus — “Bear witness, royal Fair !
These counsellors from upper air
Thus aid me judgment to declare.”
“No more, my lord ! the gums are thine.”
“Lady, their fragrance I resign ;
The *wreath* — THY WREATH — alone be mine !”

To thee, dear girl, what need to tell
The moral thou hast proved so well ?

In whom together meet,
What jointly must their powers dispense
To satisfy a sapient sense,
The useful with the sweet !

A VISION.

[1832.]

“ And when the fit was on him I did mark
How he did shake — ‘tis true — this god did shake ;
His coward lips did from their color fly,
And that same eye, whose bend doth awe the world,
Did lose its lustre.”

SHAKSPEARE.

TIME hath been

When dreams were oracles, and slumber proved
The source of inspiration ; when the senses
Fast locked to all below, the soul was free
For impress from on high, and man awoke
Fraught with futurity — to nations round
Herald and chronicle of coming years.
This is the world’s beginning ; but for us,
On whom its ends have come, our dreams concern not
The future, but the past ; the mind revolves it
In hours of consciousness, and the mood holds
When bathed by Sleep in her lethargic dews.

And mine was such a vision, when in spirit
I looked, and lo ! before me rose that isle,
Whose rocky base is worn by waves that bore
The barque of Gama on its vent'rous way,
To climes beyond the Ganges and the morn.
I scaled its cliffs, and heard the sea-bird shriek
Around its dizzy promontory ; thence
Stooped to its shadier vale, admiring oft
The culture that to vegetative bloom
Could force that sterile soil. And I bethought me
Of him, the wretched Lusian,* to this spot
Self-exiled, victim of his own misdeeds,
And Albuquerque's barbarian policy.
Scorning to carry his disfigured front
Among his former peers, or leave at last
A mutilated corpse to fill its niche
Amid his fathers' sepulchres ; abjuring
Country, connections, friends, and kindred dust,
He hid him here ; and trained the vine, and taught
The various plants of Europe, like himself,
To bear a foreign home ; striving by toil

* Fernandez Lopez, a Portuguese nobleman, who, after the victory at Goa, was punished cruelly for his apostacy to the Moors, by having his nose and ears slit — at the command of the Governor General — a stain on that otherwise magnanimous character. Instead of being sent home, Lopez was, at his own request, landed on this island, in the year 1513, twelve years after its first discovery by John de Nova, and fifteen after de Gama had first doubled the southern promontory of Africa. To Lopez the island is said to have been indebted for most of its early cultivation.

On the hard face of earth — less cursed to him
Than was the face of man — to dispossess
From their stronghold the demons of remorse,
Despair, and madd'ning memory. Little thought he,
Another and more memorable exile
Should, centuries after, pace his bowers among,
And haply gather the perennial fruits
His hand had early scattered! But such thoughts
And all beside gave way, when I beheld,
Within his martial couch and warrior shroud,
The Evil Genius of the present time
Taking his final leave of it, henceforth
Part of eternity! Already settled
Its awful shadows round his brow, and closed
His sunken eyelids. One by one each sense
Had yielded up its function. Can it be?
This powerless arm belonged to him, who proved
In very deed the Syracusan's project,
And tossed the globe? This swoln and stiff'ning form —
Is this the same whose fatal activeness
Was felt, when, from the Tiber to the Nile,
Echoed his trumpet and his tread? The Alps
Frowned as their everlasting snows reflected
The lightning of his steel; and the hot desert,
Through all its vast and sandy solitudes,
Has shook to hear his rolling thunders waken

The slumber of the pyramids. But no !
'T is fable — in the nineteenth age, nay more,
In one, the star of whose nativity
Rose in the same horizon with our own —
That such things were — and this is all a dream.
Would it were but a dream ! And, sure, 't would seem so,
Did not Marengo, Jena, Austerlitz,
And Lodi's bridge, and Berezina's flood,
All rife with fate, attest its verity
With many a dread memorial !

But not now,
In presence of thy bier, would we call up
The list of thine offences. Gone thy victims,
And gone thyself beyond all human audit.
The execrations that had reached thee once
Are stilled, for thou art still ; and Death has made
Inviolable peace 'twixt thee and man.
Thy bier has moved the mem'ry from thy sins
To trace thy sufferings. Never change like thine !
The arbiter of Europe's destinies
A suppliant for his own ; and he who found
A continent too narrow for his march,
Now cramped in one small isle. The mighty one,
Who set his foot upon the necks of kings,
And bade them do him homage for their crowns,
Now destined to endure, while he despised,

A courtly minion's petty despotism,
Proud, like the keeper of the Lybian lion,
Who lords it o'er the royal brute with tyranny,
Teasing, yet trifling.

Thine imperial bride,
Who would have shared thy banishment, denied thee ;
And thy bright son, whose "baby brow" had worn
So soon "the round and top of sovereignty,"
No more to greet his sire. And grant thy heart
Less meet than others for familiar ties,
Still it was human, and as such has felt
When that the right the veriest peasant holds
To commune with his own, was reft from thee !

Through opening ranks that line the long parade
Onward the funeral car has moved, and now
Adown the steep the soldiers' arms have borne
Their fellow soldier ; long the grenadier
Shall boast this burden ! In thy stony chamber
They rest thee now, while robed and mitred priests
Lift high the prayer and consecrate the tomb ;
And thrice from cliff to cliff the cannon's peal
Reverberates long and loudly ; while between,
From the far distant ship, the groaning gun
Sends its according sound the ocean o'er,
Startling the Spirit of the stormy Cape,

To call his tempests round him for reply
To such strange menaces.

And they have sealed

The stone, and set the watch ; lest e'en thy bones,
Thy very skin, like the Bohemian's, minister
To mortal fray. So thy career has closed ;
A thing to meditate and marvel at.

For we but see events ; where tend their issues,
Presumptuous we pronounce not, nor decipher
The mystic characters by Providence
Stamped on the scroll that holds his high decrees,
Unmeet for man to utter ! This is plain —
All lust of power was not concentrated
In him whom St. Helena sepulchred,
When Austria treads the spark of freedom out
That Italy had kindled. When the Czar
Joins with the turbaned miscreant 'gainst those Greeks
Who rose to wrest the field of Marathon
From Moslem profanation. Thou dead one !
It were enough to have compelled thy features
To smile Sardonic, when the holy league
Thus gave the lie to its own protestations,
And to the faith of all those credulous ones
Who put their trust in princes. But for thee !
Who shall attempt thine epitaph ? — and when ?
All have heard evil of thee, but the day

Has not yet dawned when what was good as truly
Shall be recorded. Sure thou hadst thy good ;
Impious it were to think the Godhead's image
Impressed on man could e'er be wholly lost !
Witness their love, whose self-devotedness
Clung to thy shipwrecked barque, with hold as firm
As when triumphantly it rode the surges,
With all its canvas and its streamers out,
Favored by wind and tide. Nor desperate these
With momentary fervor; steadily
They followed to thy prison-house ; for thee
Renounced the world ; endured the wayward moods
Of fallen grandeur and of wasting nature ;
Nor left till life had left. In Wisdom's view
'Twere worth the price of both thy diadems
To prove such friendship ! — this, of all thy honors
Most to be coveted. Thou hadst thy good ;
For splendid Art and philosophic Science
Owned thee their patron ; and thy height of power,
If wrongly gained, was rightly used for purposes
Of wisest legislation. For ourselves,
Who sit in judgment on thy deeds, have we
Looked to our own ? The lesson of thy life
Learned we from thence, who claim a worthier course,
A holier prize, to copy into ours
That vigilance, and zeal, and perseverance ;

That energy unquenchable — unnerved
By no defeat, by no confinement cooled ;
(As Elba saw, and vaunted Waterloo,
Where many raised 'gainst one scarce wrought his fall.)
Then were the social weal with half that ardor
But sought, as was the selfish, then, indeed,
Thou hadst not lived in vain, but might'st repair
The wrong thou didst humanity. An influence
Strenuous and righteous thus, through the new earth,
Might mould a race of men, the like of whom
The sun ne'er looked upon ; who, if he stopped
His swift career a day in Ajalon,
Lured by a hero's call, a hero's deed,
At such a sight as this would gaze forever,
And night be known no longer.

A BALLAD

OCCASIONED BY THE LATE FATAL COMBAT* ON THE MARYLAND BORDER.

[1823.]

AND *thou* too gone! — whose name can raise
The Spirits of romantic rhyme,
The legends of departed days,
The chronicle of elder time ;

Art thou *thus* gone ? — who haply placed
In sable Edward's warlike age,
Chaucer's chivalric lines had graced,
Or sparkled from Froissart's page ! —

For not in camp or tourney high,
Could knight or noble e'er be seen,
Of manlier form or keener eye,
More dauntless heart or courteous mien.

* The duel between Commodores Decatur and Barron, which resulted in the death of the former.

And ne'er was fealty more strong
In vassal train of feudal lord,
Than glowed among that hardier throng
Who waited on thy martial word.

Witness *his* deeds whose prompt relief
'Twixt thee and fate, sprang undismayed,
With his own forehead fenced his chief,
And met the Moslem's cleaving blade !

Glory to both ! to him whose zeal
With loyal heart could burn so high ;
To thee who sought the seaman's weal
Till for thy sake he dared to die.

Where naval Carthage towered sublime,
Cumbers the mosque degen'rate earth ;
And dozing beys debase the clime
Where Hannibal received his birth.

Where old Phenicia's friendly sails
Afar her gen'rous products bore,
Our age beheld the recr'ant gales
Waft to his prey the robber Moor.

The oath that bound Hamilian's heir,
On Rome alone its vengeance hurled ;
More fell than Punic ruffian's swear —
Eternal wrath to all the world.

And emp'rors, kings, and prince or peers,
The Briton, Spaniard, Belgian, Gaul,
Had warred for half a hundred years
To break that yoke that foiled them all.

E'en there our mountain eagle flew,
Fresh in his fierceness from the West,
Kept his bold course, *untired and true*,
And soared above the Moorish crest.

Through black'ning tempests round him thrown,
His stormy baldrick scattered day,
And as its conq'ring splendors shone,
Trembled the crescent's pallid ray.

Amid that glorious list of men
Foremost we still distinguish thee,
Who broke the Christian captives' chain,
And freed the mighty middle sea !

And while the merchant's argosy
Securely o'er the sea shall roam,
Shall he not bless the thought of thee,
Who drove the pagan pirate home ?

The shades of that crusading band
Who once the Soldan's host o'erthrew,
Hailed kindred prowess from their hand
'Gainst that same misbelieving crew.

Whilst fire, and flood, and sword, and storm,
And every form of death was there,
Shrank the fierce Turk before that form
That seemed "a charmed life to wear."

And when he saw thy galiot's prow
Through threefold forces cut its room,
Deemed *that* predestined hour was nigh
When Allah willed his children's doom ;

Saw thy brave brother's life expire,
And scimitars surrounding clashed,
But swift dilating in his ire,
On to his march the Avenger dashed ;

Singly, five foeman's blades thrust by,
Rushed to the wretch that wrought his fall,
And sent the death-stroke from thine eye
Before he felt it from thy ball.

Nor chief the Saracen to quell
Sufficed thy conq'ring arm to crown ;
Before that arm a trophy, fell
The lion banner of renown !

Though since, that banner turned by fate
To those who first its ensigns wore,
Thy soul in victory unelate
Its failure undejected bore.

Did chance or change thy course invade,
Like clouds that tinge Italian skies,
They did but soften by their shade
The dizzying radiance of its dyes.

O ! who that through our firmament,
To mark thy radiant pathway, stood,
Had thought, ere half the day was spent,
To see that sun go down in blood ?

For sunk in powerless sleep is he
Who once a nation's bolts could throw,
And Moorish ghosts have laughed at thee,
To see a Christian lay thee low.

Long gazed upon that glorious scene,
The Genius of thy country near ;
Now, more in sorrow than in wrath,
He turns him from thy gory bier !

From all the scenes that formed the past
His partial glance alone would see,
And bid oblivion screen the last,
Could it o'ershadow aught of thee.

Yet, 'mid thy fault, I fondly view
No selfish jar, no private feud —
Though rash and dire the means — as true,
Their object was thy country's good ;

Such love that heart thy country gave ;
To it thy life, thy death was given,
Prizing its cause, its service, more
Than aught of earth — alas ! or Heaven.

That parent country wails aloud
The fav'rite of so many years,
And would upbraid him, but his shroud
Changes her chidings into tears !

“Son of my strength,” I hear her cry,
“I bless thee in this last adieu !
E’en I forgive thou *thus* should die ;
GOD, OF HIS GRACE, FORGIVE IT, TOO !”

A FRAGMENT.

[FEBRUARY, 1817.]

THE wind is high, the tempest is abroad !
Thou hear'st it not, my brother ! feel'st no more
Its rude assaultings ; thou who erst could breast
The shock of storms and wind with fearless front,
That almost mocked the peril others shrunk from ;
Alas ! perchance, thence earlier overpowered,
Suddenly prostrate, while the selfish souls
That cautious calculate the doubtful risk,
Live on — live long ! whilst thou, beloved !
Art in that lowly house, whereto my thought
So often turns, sickening at all beside,
And emulous of thy mysterious rest,
Whate'er it be !

The tempest rages on,
And not unwelcomely ; afar it keeps
The ceremonious guest, the officious friend,
Both with one aim to banish from thy tomb
The faithful thought, or lead it, truant-like,
To lose itself amid the trivial themes
And desultory movements of the hour.

But now alone, and still, and serious here,
'Tis sweet, how sad soe'er, it still is sweet
To be together, love ! amid these gusts,
(Which have been likened to a spirit's voice,
With reason, though with fancy,) to persuade me,
I feel thy presence and I hear thy tones.

But be this as it may, I am with THEE !
How often with thee in the communings
Of secret mind, when all around suppose me
Intent on other matter, he alone,
The Master Spirit, he alone can know,
Or tell, perhaps, to thine.

Thou who art ever with me, like a God,
Unseen, yet omnipresent, witness, Charles,
How all unwillingly I turn my mind
From musing on thy fate, e'en at the call
Of holy duty ; seems it holier duty,
And primal, too — at least, my sickly spirit
So dreams of it — to linger on those hours,
Those brief but bitter hours, thy latest !

Yet spare me, Memory, spare th' appalling image
Of that dear face, such as in death I saw it,
And give it back as it was wont to be,
Ruddy with health and life. Spare the thought
Of that loved voice, now faint and tremulous,
Now with delirium wild ! Canst thou not show him

As for so many years he stood before me ?
Why turn tormentor, and thus rack my fancy
With visions but of anguish ?

The spring returned, but not to thee returned !
And summer came — *thy* summer never came !
And next the fatal season follows on
That took thee from us ; never more by me
That season can be witnessed but with woe !

The reaper's song shall wake no glad response,
And the bright glories of the harvest moon
Shine dimly through my tears. Would I could sleep
Until the vintage shall be gathered in !
“The joyous vintage” — so they name it.

The sun smiles on as ever, and the skies
With answering looks of clear and cheering hues
Seem in contempt to hold the mourner's heart,
For *Nature* mourns with no one. Yet methought
Of late it did ; for see, our leaves have fallen,
Have fallen like thee, my brother, to the ground,
Though not like thee, untimely. They have seen
Their summer through ; nor mocked the gazer's hope ;
Whilst thou, beloved ! —

Yet yon little tree
Retains its mite of foliage, while the large
And loftier ones that skirt our garden round
Have lost their honors; yonder slender stem
Still holds its three small twigs toward the sun,
And twinkles its few leaves amid the breeze.
It is *the tree*; *thou planted it* when thy health
Was firm, thine arm was strong, thy hopes were high,
And now, how sickens it thy sister's heart,
To think the verdure of that little tree
Outlasted thine!

TO C—.

[1817.]

I PLANT no roses on thy grave,
To mock decay with fragrant breath ;
Or gaudy hues in triumph wave
O'er the pale form that wastes beneath.

No laurel o'er that form shall tower,
To boast a life outlasting thine ;
And vaunt its leaf's perennial power,
In contrast with thy swift decline.

The sculptured stone the proud uprear,
The venal verse by flattery paid,
Were odious to thy living ear,
Nor shall they shame thy parted shade.

Thy name thyself, in idle hour,
Graved on the rind of yonder tree ;
And still through sun and storm and shower,
That sylvan record stands of thee.

Naught else, save but the tear, the sigh
That ever must thy loss deplore,
Till thine own voice in realms on high,
Shall bid the mourner mourn no more !

“WHEN SHALL WE THREE MEET AGAIN?”*

[1816.]

LONG years have passed, but vernal May
Returns this anniversary day,
When yet 't was mine, in converse sweet,
A pair of precious friends to greet ;
The question quick, the prompt reply,
The quicker language of the eye,
The flash that lightened either face,
The hand's close clasp, the long embrace —
These once were mine ; ah, cease the strain,
For ne'er can these be mine again !

The years return, but never more
Those friends partake my simple store ;
Low in the earth their forms repose,
High to the heavens their spirits rose,

* Macbeth.

Whilst, by life's longer storm oppressed,
I gaze with envy on their rest,
And to the passing wind complain,
"When shall we three meet again."

Appalling thought! ere that can be,
All things must cease that now I see ;
Stars from their stations must retire,
Faint the pale moon, the sun expire,
Earth must depart, nor heaven remain,
Ere we three can meet again !

THE VASE.

[1816.]

HEAR ye ! who list this simple lay,
How Lusitanian lady gay,
From sunnier regions far away,
 Myrtle and orange bowers,
Deigned in our frigid climes to stay,
Cheating the dullness of the day,
By bidding yonder vase display
 Its imitative flowers.
Within that vase, a wondrous thing,
Her talismanic touch could bring
The mimic progeny of spring
 To live, or seem to live,
And in her reverie would seem
To foster Fancy's, Memory's dream,
Oblivion's images redeem,
Teach fond associate thoughts to beam,
 And warmth and fragrance give.

As brief, as brittle as that dream,
The vase, alas! my mournful theme!

Too soon in dust was laid!

Protecting sylphs, is this your care?
And guardian gnomes, O! tell me where—
Where was your wonted aid?

That aid, which still from age to age
Shall shine in Pope's recording page,

Yon monster might have stayed;
And ye, too, train of elphin birth,
Titania's subjects, sylphs of earth,
Though tiny each, your myriad worth
Collective might have saved.

A fierce grimalkin from the wood
Profaned the shrine wherein it stood,
And as the Ephesian miscreant viewed
The temple firm and fair,
Alike this modern outlaw, proud
And bold, to sure destruction vowed
This vase, so rich and rare.

Nor in suspense the blow was hung;
Swift to his mark the ruffian sprung,
Like tiger on his prey.
Down fell the vase with clashing sound,
And all its fragments on the ground
Beauteous in ruins lay!

E'en so Palmyra's prostrate towers,
The pride of other days than ours,
 Attract the musing eye,
And at Etrurius' mould'ring fane,
And thine, O, classic Greece ! must gain
 The moralizing sigh.

If towers and temples thus must fall,
E'en vases, too, must hear the call
 Of violence of time.

Yet shall the muse thy worth rehearse,
Thou shattered subject of my verse,
 In monumental rhyme.

'Twas Gallia gave thee to the day,
Moulded of purest porcelain clay,
 Thy well-proportioned frame,
Thy polished front, thy snowy side,
And colors bright, were all her due,
 And hers to give thy name.

And since the Fates decree that all
Of Gallia's arms or arts must fall
When leagued grimalkins 'reft her hall
 Of statue and of bust,
What wonder if it be presumed
Her roses, like her Venus, doomed,
 Should fall and kiss the dust ?

Behold, all ye this verse who list,
How humblest instruments assist

In every grand design :

Columbian cats, though rough the race,
Republicans, and out of place,
May aid Duke Wellington, His Grace,
“Great moral lessons” to impress,

While vases share the like distress

With fallen Napoleon’s line !

O ! that were mine the votive skill
Of him who taught his notes to swell
The drowning tabby’s funeral knell

With Orpheus’ fabled power !

Then higher should my notes ascend,
And fitter melodies attend

The vase’s final hour ;

But, since ’tis all a bard can do
To do his best, that best for you,

Lady, my hand essayed ;

And if it wake one ready smile
Sense of privation to beguile,

The effort is repaid.

STANZAS

COMMEMORATIVE OF THE TWENTY-THIRD DAY OF DEC., 1815, WHEN THE BRITISH
WERE REPULSED FROM NEW ORLEANS.—AN ATTEMPTED IMITATION
OF SIR WALTER SCOTT'S VERSES ON MR. PITT'S BIRTHDAY.

O, DARK was the cloud and more dark the foreboding,
When the conq'rors of France and the champions of Spain
Turned hither those bolts late so fatal exploding,
Far flashing the lightnings of battle again !
Now the blackness no more the horizon deforms,
Be the incense of thankfulness wafted on high,
Nor let gratitude's flower, which has flourished in storms,
'Mid the sun of security wither and die.

When the earth with its groans joins the sea with its roaring,
In a menace that startles his tottering walls,
To his tutelar saint for protection imploring,
The terrified Lusian in agony calls ;

But departs with the danger, the feeling it forms,
When nature resumes her original guise,
And gratitude's flower, that was nourished in storms,
'Neath the sun of security withers and dies.

Far from us be the sin of thy slaves, Superstition !
Whose ingrate sensations no ardor retain,
Till the element war that portends their perdition,
Shall shock them to feeling and phrenzy again ;
More gen'rous emotions our bosoms shall warm,
Than timidity's tremor that danger is nigh ;
Nor shall gratitude's flower, which we cherished in storm,
In the sun of security wither and die.

For yet hail we the chieftain commissioned to save,
We invoked as our guardian from perils at hand,
When the bellow of battle was heard on the wave,
And kindred convulsions were quaking the land.
That sea-shout he stilled, those convulsions he stayed ;
Then be gratitude's fragrancy still wafted high,
And beware, lest the flower safe thro' storm and thro' shade,
In security's sunbeam be suffered to die.

But cheer we the chief, who, empowered by high Heaven,
Reduced civic chaos to order and plan,

Made to contrary forces one impulse be given,
And the mind of the many the mind of one man.
To him and his band, as returns this proud morning,
Fresh chaplets we'll culture all change to defy ;
From our heart's hardy flower that, all seasons adorning,
Nor in storm nor in sunshine can wither or die.

Sprung from Scotia,* whose sons, northern lights 'mid the nation,
Illumine the mists of her spirit-starred sky,
There beatified Moore,† from his bright elevation,
Shall bend on thy valor a brother's fond eye !
Ah ! haply, no tear damped the wreath that we form,
With thy palm and thy laurel no cypress we tie ;
They are gratitude's flowers which, immortal through storm,
In the sun of security never shall die.

* Sir J. Moore.

† Gen. Jackson is said to have been born in Scotland.

S T A N Z A S

ON A VIEW OF NEWSTEAD PARK, BELONGING TO A SEAT LATE THE PROPERTY
OF THE RIGHT HONORABLE LORD BYRON.

[1814.]

FROM scenes like these, that far and wide
Rise and expand in sylvan pride,
Where fickle man might find in range
From hill to vale, congenial change ;
From scenes whose very hues impart
Good and gay cheerfulness of heart,
Could e'er their reckless owner roam,
With guilt and gloom to find a home ?
To wander, like the exiled ghost,
From heavenly fields forever lost,
Doomed, with Elysium yet in view,
His wayward rovings to pursue,
Where tosses Doubt's tumultuous sea,
Thy shattered wreck, Depravity !

Degenerate Gordon ! not like thee
Have proved thy nobler ancestry ;
Nor rambling taste, nor thirst of gain,
From them had wrung their loved domain ;
Naught lured them from their native hall
But fatal honor's sternest call ;
Their only signal to depart
The beating of a loyal heart ;
That, when Culloden's crimsoned bed
Heaved with the dying and the dead,
Followed its guiding beams afar,
Till set in blood the *Stuart's star*,
While heaven and earth combined to sign
The ruin of that royal line.

Son of the Muse, celestial guide,
Wont to inspire far purer pride !
Son of the Muse ! had *gold* the power
To win from thee thy classic bower ?
Of Byron should it e'er be told
His birthright bartered was — for gold ?

Alas ! for thou hast sold yet more
Than fragile dome or earth-born store ;
And Virtue mourns, in early day,
A brighter birthright cast away ;

What time delirious Passion's bowl
Dissolved thy priceless pearl — the soul !*
O, crowned by heaven with youth and health,
And mental hoards and worldly wealth,
Vain the vast patrimony's aid !
Thy debt on high has ne'er been paid ;
Thy means perverted from the aim
That had discharged the loftiest claim ;
Guilt's lawless traffic lost for thee
The treasures of futurity !

Yet might it be — thyself — thy song
Are causelessly accused of wrong ;
And tell-tale Fame, though still believed,
Has still as constantly deceived ;
And thy free soul, unleagued with ill,
Retains its guardian angel still,
Who, when Temptation's fiends assailed,
Has wrestled for thee and prevailed ;
If so, the burning blush suffuse,
The bitterest tear bedim the Musè ;
To find it false were cause to rue,
Unequalled, save — to find it true !

* The pearl of the soul may be melted away. — T. MOORE.

Yet must the mind misgive thy lot
That lingers on this pictured spot,
Gazes its many beauties o'er,
And still returns to number more,
Musing what bliss 'twere here to find
A solace for the wearied mind.

When long sustained the various parts
Of public trust in arms or arts,
Blessing and blest — how fitly here
Might pause from toil a British Peer !
Be welcomed by the well-known shade
Where many a truant prank he played,
And taste the fruit and pluck the flower,
Creations of his earlier hour.

From courts and camps, in groves like those,
Thy hero, Blenheim, found repose ;
To breathe the calm that such inspire,
Would awful Chatham's self retire ;
And sacred ever be the shade
Where, matchless Burke ! thy form was laid,
When, pond'ring all thy country's woes,
The genius of prescience rose,
And spread such visions to thy sight
As checked the spirit's hastening flight,
And stopped of age the coming night,

Bidding, as erst in Ajalon,
The mental sun not yet go down !

Beside that bright and tranquil stream
How pleasant to recline and dream !
Listening the while its gentle sound
Not even fairy ear might wound,
Nor passing zephyr dare molest
The sacred quiet of its breast.
In gay translucency complete,
Yet mild as bright — O, emblem meet !
The very heaven assigned the just,
The haunt of beatific trust,
Where no defilement enters e'er,
Seems scarce more fair, more calm, more dear.
Byron ! from this — and couldst thou pass ?
Perchance, because its faithful glass
To thy inquiring glance has shown
Features the contrast to its own.
Far other images might find
Access to that distempered mind —
The dark wave warring 'gainst the shore,
The wild cascade's eternal roar ;
What scorns, or what maintains control,
Suits the stern habits of thy soul.

Where opes yon vista, to disclose
Deep blushing how th' horizon glows,
'Twere sweet to watch the sun descend,
Like patriarch or like patriot's end —
The radiance of whose parting light
Gleams far athwart the grave's long night,
And glances to that distant shore
Where suns arise to set no more.

Or where the hill's serener brow
O'erlooks the bustling world below,
Wait till that glorious orb arise,
And ride along the nether skies,
A warrior, awful to assail,
With fiery lance and golden mail,
Who, while his own impassive form
Derides of heaven and earth the storm,
Has ireful shafts, so swift, so sure,
That mortal strength can ne'er endure ;
When that, in vengeance like a God,
O'er scorching realms he proudly trod,
But oftener when he glads the view
Like as a God in bounty, too,
Painting the flow'ret and the stone
With tints without his touch unknown,

Aiding the labors of the swain,
Granting to life its feast of grain ;
The holiest heart was e'er bestowed
Might hail him on his heavenly road,
And pardon that the pagan knee
Had bent in fond idolatry.

Sweet scene, farewell ! Although these eyes
Behold thee but through mimic dyes ;
Though ne'er my step may wander o'er
To ancient Albion's distant shore,
Yet for this semblance shall my heart
Long bless the imitative art.

But *thou* ! whose meed it was to know
The substance of this shadowy show,
At will to visit such a shrine,
With the *high* consciousness — 'TWAS THINE,
Couldst thou — whate'er the syren call —
From such an Eden fly — self-driven ?
Its social bower, its festive hall,
Its lawns, its waters, woods, its all —

“O ! how couldst thou renounce, and hope to be forgiven ?”

S T A N Z A S

SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN WRITTEN NEAR A VILLA IN NAPLES, ONCE THE
RESIDENCE OF EMMA, LADY HAMILTON.

Yes, thy enlightened mind can scorn
The fables of the nursery page,
And hold of fraud or error born
The legends of a monkish age :

Of witch or fay, in evil hour,
Foul demons, garbed in form most fair,
With heroes spell-bound by their power,
Or nature vassalled in their care.

Yet persons, places, there may be
Our doubts could to conviction turn ;
Make us, what we have heard, to see,
And force us on the faith we spurn.

And this is one ! and stranger, sure,
If holily thy heart incline
'T will pray, should e'en the syren lure,
The deafened adder's part be thine.

For here dwelt one, whose gifts of art
And grace of nature could combine
To harbor a demoniac heart,
Hid in the goodliest human shrine —

And as the rebel seraphim
That heaven records with dire renown,
Drew other spirits like to him,
E'en from their high allegiance down —

Son of the morning ! so could she,
NELSON ! thy noble mind o'erthrew,
To forfeit what was due from thee,
To God above or man below.

To blight that hero's laurel-crown,
Her deadly nightshade on she threw,
And round the stars of his renown,
A dark and misty halo drew.

His “milk of human kindness” all
Was changed and cursed by sorcerer’s art ;
And milder feelings turned to gall,
That wont to circle round his heart.

False then, to trust luxurious joys
With barb’rous deeds have nought in kind,
That swords cannot be joined with toys
To supple and to steel the mind.

Its reckless lord,* ‘mid flaming Rome
Wakening the viol’s warbling, stood ;
And Stuart left his goblet’s foam,
To banquet upon Russell’s blood.

The vices, allied in their aim,
Still in each other’s tread pursue ;
And she who loses woman’s shame,
Soon loses woman’s pity too.

When ruined patriots’ cries arose,
’T was hers the monarch’s ear to engage ;
To turn them fenceless to their foes,
And quench in blood their “noble rage.”

* Nero.

'T was hers the accursed doom to spy,*

Where aged Honor met his end,
Whilst to his death-distorted eye
Glared horrible the female fiend !

Sorc'ress ! when next you meet again,
In other hands the penal power ;
Not thine to wield the vengeance then,
When next that murdered form shall lower !

As when, slow rising o'er the wave,
It struck the guilty Bourbon dumb :
A spectral herald from the grave,
A monitor of wrath to come !

Yet, if the guilt that stains the soul,
Immortal as that soul may be —
And crimes their dark, dark shadows roll,
O'er scenes of far futurity ! —

Then, the blot of Albion's isle,
Though Italy's ensanguined scourge,
Oh Hamilton ! th' avenger's *smile*,
Nor further need thy sentence urge.

* Carocciobi.

The bosom serpents cherished here,
Hereafter shall that bosom tear ;
Medusa's loose and ruthless peer
Medusa's loathsome doom must bear.

Then, traveller ! turn thee hence, and *curse her not*,
Who waits, imprisoned 'neath the clod,
Stern retribution's righteous lot,
The final *fiat* of her God.

THE RAINBOW.

[1813.]

SEEN through the misty southern air,
What painted gleam of light is there,
 Luring the charmed eye ?
Whose mellowing shades of different dyes
In rich profusion gorgeous rise,
 And melt into the sky ?

Higher and higher still it grows,
Brighter and clearer yet it shows,
 It widens, lengthens, rounds ;
And now that gleam of painted light,
A noble arch, confessed to sight,
 Spans the empyreal bounds.

What curious mechanician wrought,
What viewless hands, as swift as thought,
 Have bent this flexible bow ?
What seraph touch these shades could blend,
Without beginning, without end ?
 What sylph such tints bestow ?

If Fancy's telescope we bring
To scan withal this peerless thing,
The Air, the Cloud, the Water King,
 'Twould seem their treasures joined,
And the proud monarch of the day,
Their grand ally, his splendid ray
 Of eastern gold combined.

Vain vision, hence ! that will reverse,
Which in Creation's infant year,
Bade, in compassion to our fear,
 (Scarce spent the deluge rage,)
Each elemental cause combine,
Whose rich effect should form this sign,
 Through every future age.

O, Peace ! the rainbow-emblemed maid,
Where have thy fairy footsteps strayed ?

Where hides thy seraph form ?
What twilight caves of ocean rest ?
Or in what island of the blest
Sails it on gales of morn ?

Missioned from heaven in early hour,
Designed through Eden's blissful bower
 Delightedly to tread,
Till exiled thence in evil time,
Scared at the company of crime,
 Thy startled pinions fled.

E'er since that hour, alas, the thought !
Like thine own dove, who vainly sought
 To find a sheltered nest,
Till from the East, the South, the North,
Doomed to be driven a wanderer forth,
 And find not where to rest ;

Till when the west its world displayed
Of hiding hills and sheltering shade,
Thither thy weary flight was stayed,
 Here fondly fixed thy seat ;
Our valleys and our desert caves,
Our wall of interposing waves,
 Seemed a secure retreat.

In vain ! from this thy last abode
(One pitying glance on earth bestowed)
We saw thee take the heavenward road,
 Where yonder cliffs arise ;
Saw thee thy tearful features shroud,
Till cradled on the conscious cloud
That to await thy coming bowed,
 We lost thee in the skies.

For now the maniac demon, War,
Whose ravings, heard so long from far,
Convulsed us with their distant jar,
 Nearer and louder roars ;
His arm, that death and conquest hurled
On all beside of all the world,
 Claims these remaining shores.

What though the laurel leaves he tear,
Proud round his impious brow to wear
 A wreath that will not fade ?
What boots him its perennial power ?
These laurels canker where they flower,
 They poison where they shade.

But thou, around whose holy head
The balmy olive loves to spread,
 Return, O nymph benign !
With buds that Paradise bestowed,
Whence "healing for the nations" flowed,
 Our bleeding temples twine.

For thee our fathers ploughed the strand ;
For thee they left that goodly land,
 The turf their childhood trod,
The hearths on which their infants played,
The tombs in which their sires were laid,
 The altars of their God.

Then, by their consecrated dust,
Their spirits — spirits of the just,
 Now near their Maker's face ;
By their privations and their cares,
Their pilgrim toils, their patriot prayers,
 Desert thou not their race.

Descend to mortal ken confessed,
Known by thy white and stainless vest,
And let us on the mountain crest

That snowy mantle see ;
O, let not here thy mission close !
Leave not the erring sons of those
Who left a world for thee !

Celestial visitant ! again
Resume thy gentle, golden reign,
Our honored guest once more ;
Cheer with thy smiles our saddened plain,
And let thy rainbow, o'er the main,
Tell that the storms are o'er !

O C E A N .

A NAVAL PRIZE ODE.

[1813.]

ALL hail, thou mightiest, monstrous Power !
To whom, in this tempestuous hour,
 The nations bow the knee !
This hour, when Heaven's right arm hath hurled
Its thunders round a warring world,
O'er Christendom one bloody flag unfurled,
 We lift our eyes to thee !

Primeval Power ! ere order sprung,
While yet o'er chaos darkness hung,
Thou wert ; and when, in onward time,
The impious mortal stained by crime
The image of his Sire sublime ;
Then, great Avenger ! didst thou rise,
And swelling to the darkened skies,

Each of thy waves commissioned then
Whelmed in the worthless race of men !

Ocean! that venerable name,
What tongue unfaltering shall proclaim ?
Here, as upon my native plain
That borders on thy wide domain,
I stand, and strive one glimpse to gain
Of half thy worth, but strive in vain.
Power! to whose hundred hands is given
To toss their foam against the face of heaven,
And, ere insulted heaven its wrath can show,
Retreat in safety to th' abyss below.
Extent! whose untold regions lie
Where man nor angel e'er could pry,
Who mantlest round this mighty globe,
As in one vast, cerulean robe.
And *wealth!* whose many massive heaps
Lie piled within thy cavern deeps,
Where new Peruvia's unfold
Their copious veins of liquid gold,
And other India's rise to spread
Of rival gems, thy sparkling bed.

Yet, grand and awful as thou art,
'Tis ours with no foreboding heart,
 To count thy glories o'er ;
Descendants from that western wild,
Of heaven the latest, loveliest child,
Who safe in thy protection smiled,
 Nor asked nor cared for more :
Blooming so long from all intrusion free,
And known to none but Heaven and thee ;
Till he, thy chosen chieftain, came,
Genoa's boast, Iberia's shame ;
(Blest, had he never ceased o'er thee to roam,
Nor found disgrace, and chains, and death at home.)
He wooed and won the peerless dame,
And gave to her his honored name.
E're since that hour, their children, we,
In weal or woe thy aid can see.
In war, thy guarding waters rose,
A fence between us and our foes ;
In peace, thy stars have been our guides,
Our coursers swift thy foaming tides,
And safe have been our billowy rides,
As when some white-winged seraph glides
 To haven of repose.

Far to that execrated shore,
Where ancient Carthage towered of yore,
'Twas thy supporting arms that bore
'Gainst Punic perfidy the band
Who well avenged our injured land,
And drove the crescent, bathed in blood,
To hide its blushes in the flood ;
But when no effort could withstand
The wily Turk's ensnaring hand,
Snatched for themselves the lighted brand,
And, mounting in a shroud of flame,
Died to the world — to live in fame !*

And now, though in the recent year
That compassed our "diurnal sphere,"
Defeat, disgrace, and want, and fear,
Wherever else we look, appear ;
Yet, when to thee we turn our eyes,
Some stars amid the storms arise.
Lo ! twice within that little year,
Behold yon trophied barque appear,

* This refers to Capt. Somes and Lieutenants Wadsworth and Israel, who, seeing themselves surrounded by three gunboats in the harbor of Tripoli, on the remarkable night of August 4th, 1804, with no prospect of escape, preferred death to slavery, and putting a match to the train of the fireship Intrepid, blew the whole into the air !

Whose eagle, in the wat'ry field,
Twice bade the British lion yield !
Whose noble mast yet stands to tell
Its native oaks — *it never fell !*
And bids Defiance' loudest blast
Challenge the world to mate that mast,
For service shared, for duty done,
For danger dared, for vict'ry won !

Ere, echoing round our gladdened shore,
The peal of triumph scarce was o'er,
Thou bad'st thy winds to bear again
O'er all its hills the lofty strain,
To tell them that another sail,
'Mid dark October's stormy gale,
In direst, deadliest shock, could close
With hearts as brave as Britain knows,
And in that shock prevail !

We crowd not on the shuddering sight
The horrors of that awful fight ;
Not ours to count the cruel scars,
And groans, and wounds of ocean wars ;
Let others note how, side by side,
The virtuous and the valiant died ;

Where gun 'gainst gun, encount'ring, lay
So near, they crossed each other's way !
And from the suff'ring and the slain
The life-stream mingled with the main,
Till Conquest grasped his laurelled crown,
Less as a symbol of renown
Than to conceal from sight, from thought,
Proofs of the price at which 'twas bought !

Thou, Ocean ! thou, the seaman's sire !
Witness for us ! while deeds like those
Approved our prowess to our foes,
Did they not, 'mid ourselves, inspire
In all the emulous desire
As well to act as to admire ?
Witness, as well it may,
That one could, unattended, roam
To Albion's very channel home,
In vain but bold essay ;
And could bid his cannon sound
To St. Salvador's farthest ground,
Till Andes might the shock rebound,
Of challenging the fray !

And soon, with streamers waving nigh,
On thy blue throne exalted high,
We hailed another naval son,
Graced with the gift his arm had won ;
A rare and goodly gift, to greet
A country ever proud to meet
The same chivalrous chief, who bore
Rich tributes once from Barbary's shore,
As Allah's sons can tell ;
But now a nobler trophy shows,
Wrested from mightier, manlier foes,
Who fought so long — so well.
Vict'ry was ours, and conflict o'er,
Found mercy had been ours before,
And kindness, from elation free,
And frank, high-minded courtesy.
In losing Peace we have not lost
That gentle grace she prizes most.
So may the goddess, when again
She re-ascends her sacred fane,
That fane, whose gates, alas ! now closed,
Have stood to force and fraud exposed,
Find still upon her altar's urn
Unquenched its lambent lustre burn.
Without is all the storm and din ;
The vestal flame yet lives within.

Once more, upon thy list of fame,
Ocean ! inscribe another name ;
Surely, we may not ask in vain
For him, who ne'er can ask again !
For him, most prized, yet pitied most —
For Lawrence, honored — Lawrence, lost !
For him, who erst the fight maintained,
And erst the conqueror's chaplet gained,
 And better, nobler far,
Who sprang where battle fiercest bled,
Between the living and the dead,
 And stayed the waste of war !
For him, whose virtues were declared
By enemies his sword had spared,
What time his arm humanely dared
The reeling captive to sustain,
And snatch the sinking from the main.
The life, in fight half lost before,
Was now to peril risked once more,
Till, aiding in the great emprise,
His comrades sank before his eyes.
This — this may Fame's sublimest song
In everlasting note prolong !
O, glorious end ! O, death of pride !
The victors for the vanquished died !

But be the shouts of triumph o'er ;
Strike the high warbling harp no more !
And let the minstrel's measure know
No tones but tones of martial woe !
O'er the slow undulating tide
Let only mournful music glide,
And but the solemn sounding oar
Awake the silence of the shore.
Let Fancy to the tufted steep
For sad sepulchral sights retire,
Where wildly o'er the moaning deep
The mermaids tear
Their golden hair
And fling it on the funeral pyre.
Such sorrows, to the patriot dear,
Befit a hero's bloody bier ;
Such, Lawrence ! to thy name be paid
All that can greet thy gallant shade.
O, thou ! whose gen'rous arm could save
Thy fellows from an early grave,
What blessings had to him belonged
Who had a life like thine prolonged ?

Yet had thy parting been deferred,
Hadst thou been spared, thou hadst but heard

Thy country to thy claims demurred,*
Nor paid thee for thy wounds a word.

Indignant shade ! I see thee stand
On wild Canadia's adverse strand,
 While round the night breeze moans,
And pointing with thy shadowy hand,
Thy voice exclaims, " Ungrateful land !
 Thou shalt not have my bones !" †

Long on the saddened mind shall stay
The thought of that disastrous day,
When, with thy few brave followers round,
Thou daredst dispute th' unequal ground,
Till sunk beneath thy mortal wound ;
Nor then — in the recording line
Ne'er be it said — to yield was thine ;
Till reeling sense and fainting life
Withheld thee from the desp'rate strife ;
Ne'er was that bloody banner down,
So lately starred with thy renown,

* Alluding to the refusal of a vote of thanks by the Senate of Massachusetts, for the victory in the Hornet.

† Exclamation of Scipio Africanus.

Long as thy arm could wield a sword,
Long as thy lips could breathe a word ;
Thy deeds, thy voice, this truth revealed,
That Lawrence never knew to yield !
Naught but the final enemy
Who conquers all has conquered thee !

Yet still the tributary verse
Must flow lamenting round thy hearse ;
For partial Heaven in thee combined
The sternest with the softest mind ;
Seemed that thou wert but lent, to show
The rest of Ocean's race below
How all the charities might blend,
Of father, brother, husband, friend,
Till, perfecting the patriot plan,
The warrior mellowed in the man !
But, hark ! E'en now what tidings swell !
Last, but not least, they speed to tell
Where Burroughs the invader spoiled,
His arms, his arts, o'erpowered and foiled,
But in the struggle fell !

Then be it so ! An end so great
No sighs but sighs of envy wait !

What could a Roman triumph more,
Than passed his closing eyes before ?
With falt'ring hand and bosom gored,
'Twas his to grasp a conq'ror's sword,
Like gallant Wolfe, well "satisfied"
In that he conquered, and he died !

Ocean ! when storms of conflict o'er,
Shall desolate our coasts no more,
But that firm race of thine shall come
To dignify a peaceful home,
O, grant that race to prove them, then,
Better as well as braver men ;
Wise to forbear, in civil life,
As bold to dare in hostile strife ;
For angel eyes, ~~that~~ turn afar
Abhorrent from the scenes of war,
Have yet beheld, with tears of joy,
Virtues which war could not destroy ;
That in the hot and tempting hour
Of mad success and lawless power,
When Av'rice, Pride, Revenge, contend
For mastery in the human fiend,
Could chain these furies to their den,
And make the victors more than men !

Nor solely to the chieftain free
This might of magnanimity ;
Round many an humbler head it glowed,
Through many a humbler heart it flowed ;
Those who, whate'er their leaders claim,
Must fall, themselves, unknown to Fame ;
Theirs the toil without the praise ;
The conquest theirs, but not its bays.

Then grant, great Ruler of the Main !
These virtues they may long retain ;
So shall thy waters ne'er be viewed
Without a burst of gratitude ;
So, when War's angry flame retires,
And ling'ring, on thy bed expires,
These, tried and purified, shall rise,
And, phoenix-like, ascend the skies.

A FRAGMENT.

LONE on the beatific mound,
When evening's shadows closed around,
The band have left their leader there,
In orison which none might share ;
And they have sought the sacred sea,
That laves the shores of Galilee.

But had the adversary power
To harass in that darkling hour,
That vengeful turned the tide, the gale,
Against the fisher's struggling sail ?
Though stout of arm and strong of will,
His strength is spent and foiled his skill ;
The night's fourth watch is almost closed,
Nor the tired mariner repos'd.

Oh ! vain to toil 'gainst wind and wave,
And sunk the heart the hope to save,
And lo ! is yon shape the mist of storm,
Or whence, or what, that dubious form
That seems athwart the wave to glide,
That burst anon our barque beside ?
Is it his shade, the man austere,
Of desert haunts the deep-voiced seer ?
What dread commission brings him here ?
Or is the shadowy semblance he
Late of the chosen company,
The first that Herod's vengeance proved,
The brother of the best beloved ?
Comes he to speak that brother's doom,
And tell us of a wat'ry tomb,
At such dread time of doubt and fear,
That aught unearthly should draw near ?
When lo ! with face as beams our sunbeams bright,
With robe all whitening in the light,
(But once again on Tabor's height,
In after days they saw that sight,)
Treading the tempest to their aid.
He calls — “*Tis I, be not afraid !*”
Their leader stands confessed ;
The hushed wind is at rest,

And like an infant at his will,
Low at his feet the wave lies still.
Such power to *One alone* is given ;
That One on earth, who came from heaven !

Or when upon that mystic sea,
We cross in life's extremity,
When to worn barque and shattered sail
No human art can more avail,
The latest night-watch nearly o'er,
Nor morning gilds the distant shore ;
Again may that resplendent form
Dispel the cloud and still the storm,
Come to the trembling suppliant's aid —
“*Tis I, be not afraid !*”

THE FIRST GRAVESTONE.

"And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave."

FIRST of primeval monuments! of all
The long lost trophies won by elder Time,
Fondly the mental eye reverts to thee,
Reared by the Patriarch to that Syrian spouse,
So beauteous, so beloved! meed of his toils,
What time, a wanderer from his father's house,
He sought the stranger land, and twice seven years
Of labor hard, and harder outrage proved,
When by the day the drought consumed his strength,
And frost benumbed at night! yet all was deemed
But little for the love and hope of her
Who blessed his after life; and in her turn,
For sire and country, friends and kindred left,
Found him her all in all, and paid him back
The "debt immense" of that long suffering love.
Nor died it with her death; but reared *this stone*
To witness it through ages yet to come.

True, mightier things have been ; the mounds where Thebes
Enshrines her nameless dead, and that famed pile
Of the world's wonders Artemisia reared
To her lost lord, then died for loss of him ;
Yet tend'rer thoughts and busier phantasies
Stray toward the grave of Haran's shepherdess,
And seek from Bethel's heights to Ephrath's way
That lonely sepulchre !

T H E D E A D.

How *happy* are the dead !
Ye slumberers of the tomb, I envy you,
Who in the midst of this tumultuous world
Have hied you to a spot where all its din
Rolls over you unheard ! My wearied senses,
Vexed with their lingering vigil, call for sleep
To seal them up forever. The strained eye
Aches with the force that wears its loathing gaze
On things half wild enough to make its ball
Start from its socket ; and the ear is stunned,
And gladly would hold amity with deafness,
So it might 'scape the clamor and the jar
Of this distracted globe ; and the poor heart —
The feeling heart, is sick almost to death !
Would it were quite !

Yes, I confess it ; nor can sin be called,
Nor the stern decalogue itself prohibit,

An envy like to this; those interdicts
Guarded alone our neighbor's living weal,
Nor dreamed the world should come to such a pass
Corse or corruption could be coveted,
(As Eastern sages failed to legislate
'Gainst parricide, not dreaming such a crime
Could e'er exist;) then not unlawfully,
Ye slumberers of the tomb! I envy you
Your dreamless rest. How *happy* are the dead!

LINES SUGGESTED BY A STUDY-CHAIR

BELONGING TO THE LATE HORACE HOLLEY.

PASTOR, philosopher, and friend !
Who fill'st this sacred seat no more,
Might I without presumption bend,
And lean where thou hast leaned before ?

Memorial of a master mind,
With power to bring its owner near,
In living light, like that which shined
Throughout his bright but brief career ;

In inspiration, mien, and air,
In form and front, " how like a God ! "

Such glorious creatures, some declare,
From higher spheres have walked abroad.

Yet those "called gods must die like men,"
And such the stern and fixed decree
Which leaves thee, till we meet again,
But an immortal memory.

Thy steady stand at Truth's high call,
Thy eloquence that fought and won,
Thy courtesy that cared for all,
Yet, independent, cringed to none;

With candid faith, the only shield
Thy generous zeal would deign to choose ;
Ah, vain celestial arms to wield
'Gainst arts thyself had scorned to use !

Were but thy mantle fallen here,
But part of these, thy spirit's fund,
Where but a blank can now appear ;
Who would have asked or wished beyond ?

It may not be ! But memory yet
Faithful thine image shall retain ;
Which who that saw can e'er forget,
Or look upon its like again ?

ON A WREATH

BROUGHT BY F. ALEXANDER FROM THE TOMB OF ABELARD AND HELOISE,
IN PERE LE CHAISE.

THE wreath ! but not of laurel leaved,
The conqueror's prize of yore ;
The meed of murders past achieved,
The stimulant to more !
The wreath ! but not from off the vine
The bacchanalian's boast,
Of revelry and wrath the sign,
Of soul and sense the cost.
The sabre's flame, the cup's desire,
These flow'rets ne'er have fed :
Such vanities the living fire,
These only deck the dead !
A pilgrim to the funeral shrine
Of famed but fatal love, to me
The relic brought ; nor verse of mine
May chide the friendly felony :

Memorial of a claim more near
That same sepulchral earth enshrined,
The amity of many a year,
The cordial heart, the beaming mind,
That, from its native TAGUS borne,
From orange groves his waters lave,
Where flows the stranger SEINE to mourn,
Was doomed to find a foreign grave!*

* Ann Frances Bulkley, of Lisbon, widow of Gen. Humphreys, (re-married to Col. de Walewski), was interred in Pere le Chaise.

A N_S I N S C R I P T I O N

FOR A MONUMENT TO THE MEMORY OF GEN. HUMPHREYS.

WRITTEN BY REQUEST.

[1819.]

OFT to departed worth benignant Heaven
A power of working miracles has given,
Insensate matter's gloomy rest to break,
Bid dust be eloquent and marble speak ;
Then e'en this stone by future patriots read,
May bid the living emulate the dead.
He who in youth was armed for civil right,
And shared the dangers braved in freedom's fight,
These sylvan plains, where first to life he sprung,
His sword defended, and his numbers sung ;
In graver years the statesman's toil he proved,
And served in foreign realms the land he loved.

Ere age advanced, back to that land he bore
The fleecy treasures of Iberia's shore.
Patron of arts and guardian of the state ;
Friend of the poor, and favored by the great ;
To sum all titles of respect in one —
Here Humphreys rests, *beloved of Washington !*

LINES ON A STONE FROM THE FIELD OF WATERLOO.

[1823.]

SERMONS there are in stones, the poet said,
With more than poet's truth ; *then* surely THIS
May preach most movingly. Thou *stone of slaughter*,
Midway between the warring hosts, who met
On that dire battle-field, where blood was poured
Like water ! Belgian, Briton, German, Gaul,
In one commingling current, the mad throng
In mutual rush who trod thee under foot,
A slighted pebble — where and what are THEY ?
Erst God's erect and animated works,
But yet survived and vaunted over now,
By such a thing as thou art ! Thou hast taught
One awful lesson — will the world be learners ? —
How small the gain to liberty, when man
Attempts to counteract unlicensed power
By power alike unlicensed ! Crush one head,
While a seven-headed hydra in its room

Still revels in its brutal banqueting
Upon the flesh of nations! What a cheat
To human hope! Could stones indeed cry out,
O thou mute witness! what a testimony
Were thine! But thou art cold and still, as they
Who lately pressed above thee, when thy surface
Was slippery with the gore of gallant hearts
Soon pressed in turn beneath thee! But be dumb!
Would that no eye had seen nor ear had heard,
Nor heart of man conceived it!

TO A. T., AT WASHINGTON.

WRITTEN AT MIDNIGHT, DEC. 30, 1825.

SCARCE have the notes of yonder bell
Paid to the parting eve farewell,
And now 'tis greeting loud and clear
The morning of the coming year.
But, (as in regal states, 'tis said
The grieving for an old king dead
Merges his faithful people through
In gratulation to the new,)
So seems that jocund bell more true
To sounds of welcome, than adieu !
As Allegro, with laughing grace,
Shoved Pensero from her place ;
Or as that wight to either muse *
Addressed, yet if, perforce to choose,
Yielded like all his fellows yet,
His preference to the bright *Cadette*.

* *Vide Sir J. Reynold's Garrick between Tragedy and Comedy.*

Would that this heart with kindred tone
Could beat for once in unison,
The Future teach the Past to flee,
And Hope take place of Memory !
It may not be, unless its spell
Could minister a miracle,
And give the shapes my dreams that press
Once more their wonted consciousness !

Yet not to miss, though lone the time,
The moral of that cheerful chime,
Forbid it that my ingrate strain
O'erlook the goods that yet remain.
For those around — for him apart —
Be grateful and be glad my heart ;
And since he wends afar, and may
Not meet the good old England way
Of wishing well on New Year's day,
Bid him from hence the Fates to grant
All he can ask, or wish, or want ;
And if nought else this doggerel show,
E'en as it is, so let it go,
Sure in his eyes to stand approved,
So early and so late beloved ;
Loved by the boy, and by the man,
Loved long, ere other loves began.

A DIRGE,

WRITTEN AT THE DECEASE OF JOHN ADAMS, JULY 4, 1826.

PRAISE to the virtuous dead the Heathen owed,
And funeral game, and urn, and chant bestowed ;
Praise for the virtuous dead the Christian claims,
From higher motives, and with holier aims,
O, called too soon, how late soe'r thy knell,
Our earliest, longest hope, "*Hail and farewell!*"
That fiftieth sun who brought his faithful ray
To gild thine own, and Freedom's fav'rite day,
His noontide glories flung around thy shrine,
Nor sunk to rest till thou retired to thine ;
That sacred rest attained, his parting fire
Lit the wide West as for a funeral pyre.

Survey those lineaments — that open smile,
The statesman's wisdom, not the statesman's wile —
The honest front, that knew itself sincere,
And scorned suspicion as it scouted fear ;

And hence the viperous brood, that ceaseless wait
To bask beneath the fostering beams of state,*
With means more facile found the unguarded way,
To sting the gen'rous heart where late they lay.
Ah, that the same high orb, whose smile so bright
Gives modest worth and loveliest hues to light,
Which calls the bee to rove, the ant to toil,
And herbs and flowers to bless and grace the soil,
By the same power the reptile race must bring,
And weeds and thorns, and every creeping thing.

Enough for thee, that more than half an age,
Ruler or ruled, our father, saint, or sage —
Missioned from court to court — abroad approved —
At home, when most beheld still best beloved —
Vouchers of thine the meeting virtues stand,
The stern that freed, the mild that cheered the land.

If, while that long-protracted life you scan,
Say *that he erred* agreed ; for he *was* man,
(Rest it with HIM we Sire of mercies call,
Sent through that Son whose bosom bled for all;) From life's first dawning to its latest end,
Who shall demand desert, or who defend ?

* *Vide* the Cunningham Correspondence.

Who boast the hands so clean, the heart so pure,
To turn *Inquisitor*, and turn secure ?
If such there be, to play such part who dare ?
Where are they found, objector ? Tell me where.
Still dost thou cavil ? Strike thy breast and ask,
If with *his* temper thou hadst had *his* task,*
Through all his trials hadst thou never swerved ?
By all his conflicts ne'er hadst been unnerved ?
If such the difference, well ! But, lest thou err,
Pause yet ; nor call *complexion*, character.
His the wrought marble, rich and veined all o'er,
But time and storm its substance somewhat wore ;
Thine the rough *granite* crag, alike unriven
Or by the damps of earth or bolts of heaven.

Though weak the hand this votive wreath to bring,
And faint this voice the lay of worth to sing,
Haply its tones may wake some powerful shell,
In nobler numbers noblest deeds to swell.
With his own *Themis* Clio shall engage
To stamp his name on their enduring page.
Amidst the glorious circle of compeers
That crowned our perilous but proudest years,

* *Vide* The Letters of Col. Pickering.

Record the champion, whose ingenuous youth
Intrepid fought the righteous fight of truth ;
Then, when, if ever, public virtue warms ;
Then, when, if ever, young ambition charms ;
Though all his country's wrongs the patriot claimed,
And all his country's hopes the man inflamed,
Those wrongs, those hopes, his soul refused to see,
Moved by thy higher call—Humanity ! *When the cold blood our central pavement pressed,
And the hot blood beat high in every breast ;
While an *infuriate* People's *frenzied* shout
Held not its peace, but bade those stones cry out ;
E'en mid that madd'ning din *his* voice arose,
And asked for justice to our fenceless foes ;
Bade Passion's surges rage not, but be still,
And *Law* and *Reason* sway the public will ;
And, as the oil on ocean's subject wave
Has power to lull it, till it cease to rave,
His suasive accents dropped as charms, to bind
The hoarser tumult of tempestuous mind !

Such the fair promise of his opening year,
Such the rich harvest of his ripe career ;

* His defence of the British soldiery, 4th March, 1775.

Gathered to great and good, renowned of yore,
In classic haunts long communed with before ;
With those of his own time — the wise, the brave,
Who lived to serve the state, or died to save.
What else need grateful Mem'ry ask or tell ?
Once more, Illustrious Dead, “ HAIL and FAREWELL ! ”

ODE

TO WHOM IT CONCERNNS.

[1832.]

O CAROLINA! wilt thou sever
The silver cord so long confessed ?
And must our nation's eagle never
His wing on thy Palmetto rest ?
Wrenched from thy course by these wild jars,
Madly through space to run ;
Wilt thou forsake the fixed stars,
To be a wandering one ?

Star of the South ! that wont to gleam
So steady and so bright,
Shedding afar its guiding beam
Through War's tempestuous night ;

When England's "meteor flag" full high
 "Terrific burned" o'er all,
Between us and the darkened sky,
 Like 'scutcheoned funeral pall;

Star of the South! thy glorious ray
 O'erpowered that boding glare,
Till the broad banner, rent away,
 No more could menace there.
Long as the rescuing blade was bared
 That cut our passage free,
The danger dared, the duty shared,
 Canst thou forget? *can we?*

O, land of *Marion* and his band,
 That, ever tried and true,
With gallant heart, with strenuous hand,
 The same, yet ever new,
"Came, saw and conquered," like the sprite
 More than like mortal men,
And sped them as the arrowy flight,
 That none knew where or when.

Land of the Laurens' ! son and sire,
Each peerless in his place,
A Spartan pair, a seed of fire,
Like Lacedæmon's race.
He, captive in the ocean strife,
Immured in foreign thrall,
Who perilled fortune, freedom, life,
At stubborn duty's call.

Yet, while the Julian towers confined
Their veteran prisoner fast,
The mantle of that dauntless mind
Was to his first-born cast ;
Last victim of an hostile hour,
Nor less heroic he,
Who fell, in life, in death, the flower
Of Carolina's chivalry !

Then did the reign of Peace reveal
Throughout its better day,
The gentler, not less generous zeal,
That cheered our common way.
Whene'er disease had forced to flee,
Or feel its deadlier thrust,
We yielded all we loved to thee,
Nor thou refused the trust.

Thy luscious fruits, thy sunny sky,
Thy bland and balmier air,
And more than all that these supply,
Thy hospitable care ;
All thine, the sufferer felt was ours,
Who helplessly had come,
But found, within a stranger's bowers,
The kindly hearts of home.

No half disgust that scarce could hush,
E'er made thy greeting tame ;
No dread lest that strange hectic flush
Might sere thee with its flame ;
Reckless of selfish risk or not,
Watchful but to befriend ;
O God ! and is it all forgot,
And is it all to end ?

The wise, the weak, who dwell at ease,
From storm and strife apart,
May marvel at the blasts that freeze
The tempest-beaten heart.

Let statists calmly count thy throes,
Let fools thy cause malign ;
The bosom its own burden knows —
I may not measure thine.

And, lo ! the threat is on thy tongue,
The scowl is on thy brow ;
Yet, Carolina ! ours so long,
Do not desert us now ;
Forbid that present interests screen —
Or right or wrong — from thee
The memory of what once has been,
The hope of what's to be.

Alas ! how old so'er the tale,
'Tis not less true than trite,
Wherever kindred feuds prevail,
Neither is fully right.
Yet man in every age and clime
His story well has shown,
Perversely scans his brother's crime,
And recks not of his own.

For us may better views betide
Than such a half survey,
Nor narrowing mists prevail to hide
What truth the times convey ;
But patriots still, afar or nigh,
Till civil discords cease,*
Echo impartial Carey's sigh,
For party not, but " Peace ! "

* Lucius Carey, Lord Falkland. His disinterested dread of the ultimate success of either side, his own or the opposite, from a conviction of the injury that would ensue to the common weal, and his choice of death rather than life, (a death so gallantly sought and found,) that he might not witness what he could not avert, must be familiar to all who are conversant with the story of the English civil wars.

TO M—.

[1832.]

THE first fruits for thine album's store,
 Mary ! another hand should bring ;
The far-fetched boon is valued more
 Than the familiar offering.

And wherefore need this tell-tale page
 Proclaim to strangers o'er and o'er,
What should alone thine ear engage,—
 But that thou know'st it all before.

That since our being's earliest source,
 As o'er the stream of life we glide,
One chart below to mark our course,
 One star above that course to guide ;

Nearest in blood, in heart as near,
Through all our fair or stormy weather,
Like LADIES OF THE LAKE, we steer
Our simple shallop still TOGETHER.

And let what winds or tides prevail,
(Until the final blast upset her,)
“THE SISTERS” still unparted sail,
And I for one will ask no better!

LINES TO A WALL-FLOWER FROM THE COLISEUM.

[1832.]

NAY, grieve not if thy flow'ret sent —
The promise of the Latian year —
With faded tints and foliage bent,
And broken stem should now appear.

For sure these aspects of decay,
Fitlier its native scenes recall,
Than when in golden front, so gay,
It flaunted o'er a Roman wall.

Where erst the marvel of the world —
A tottering arch, a crumbled way —
If Ruin's hand on those was hurled,
Should *this* endure more firm than they ?

Yet might the muse invest the flower
(As legendary lays pretend)
With sentient life and vocal power,
'T would thus its life and death defend —

“Wand’rer and witness of our days!
Behold to things like us ’tis given,
In answer to the asking gaze,
To vindicate the ways of heaven.

“Though quickened into life and bloom,
Our roots have sprung from Christian gore,
When at some royal murd’rers doom
Their blood like water wont to pour.

“Ere gathered to our parent earth
Mindful of its avenging call,
The flower that owed th’ oppressed its birth,
Shall triumph in the oppressor’s fall.

“Shall round his shattered column sport,
O’er all its prostrate pride elate ;
And glitter ’mid its mould’ring court,
In mockery of their buried state !

“Then, when its destined work is done,
No more its leafy flag shall wave,
But duteous *end* where it begun,
And deck in death the martyr’s grave !”

TO OUR JAVA SPARROWS.

JANUARY, 1839.

FAIR warblers from a summer clime,
Who bid'st with us in wint'ry time,
Though cold the soil on which we live,
Warm is the welcome that we give.

Companions to our kinsman given,
Through boisterous days, and tempest driven,
And tossed through many a rougher night,
The feathered freight still kept aright,
Still followed in his billowy track,
Cheering the bark that brought him back,
And chirped and hopped the time away,
As blithe as on their native spray!

*But now, with frost encompassed round,
And captives on a foreign ground,*

Far from their Java's spicy grove,
No more with early mates to rove ;
Though freedom, country, clime be lost,
That sprightly carol is not crossed.
With Quaker coat, and beaver on,
And smooth white collar, neck upon,
And ruddy beak of healthiest hue,
Cheerful they meet my morning view,
And doffed the curtain from the day,
Quick hail'st it with their matin lay.

Brave birds ! ah, would that such as we
Meet lesson might have learned from ye !
Despite of change and season drear,
Still with unconquered note to cheer.
Pick each sweet seed, howe'er astray,
And cast the refuse husk away,
Sip the clear stream, where'er 'tis given,
And look up, thankfully, to Heaven !

LITTLE CANARY.

AFFAIRS of state so excited of late
That even the feathered creation
To politics made their pretension,
Left their shady retreat
The emergence to meet,
Sending one of their swift delegation,
The fleetest for settling the nation,
To fly to the Whig Convention.

From what part of the country come
He has not said nor sung,
But a naturalized foreigner he
This Whiggie appeareth to be,
Since up to the chamber he made his way,
And into the cage where it hung
He very familiarly sprung,
Helped himself to what edibles round about lay,
Seemed very contented and happy to stay,
And made himself quite at home.

With a bright, new, straw-colored vest,
And a uniform coat and crest,
And a carol can vie with the best,
In praise of the Chief of the West!
Nor has Harrison any
'Mongst all of the many
In his canvass, or farther or nearer,
With voices or consciences clearer
(However they vary)
Than constituent *Canary*,
Who has turned, for his *tribe*, '*Lectioneer*.

THE DEAD BIRD.

DEAR Bird, that late inspired the lay,
Unnoticed shouldst thou pass away ?
Whose life, whose death, excited here
Friendship's fond care and final tear ?
No ! to thy fate shall not refuse
Her dirge the moralizing muse,
Taught by thyself each changing moon,
To keep the voice in cheerful tune.
Through summer bright or winter hoar
Above the ills of earth to soar,
So might her days like thine be past,
Cherished and solaced to the last ;
Then be her lot like thine, to die
Without a struggle or a cry !

TO LITTLE "WAG."

[1853.]

AH, darling dog, thou canst not know
 What tears were shed for thee !
And there be those might meet their flow
 With smiling mockery.

Yet who that owns a human heart,
 From friend of twelve long years,
Proved and found perfect, e'er could part,
 And yet refrain from tears ?

Companion of our couch by night,
 Beneath our board by day,
Content while we remained in sight,
 But sorrowing when away,

Still watching at the window-pane,
 Or guarding on the ground
Erect, the proffered boon to gain,
 Or pranking all around,

In frolic play to catch away
 The slipper as it dropped,
And force us, fleet in stocking-feet,
 To chase him ere he stopped.

Too mannerly to take the lead
 On stairway or at door,
Waiting (unlike the human breed)
 Till others went before.

The ready food from morn till eve
 Untasted might remain
When separate, till at our return
 He banqueted again !

In journeyings nestling at our side,
 Or crouching at our feet,
Well pleased alike to walk or ride,
 A guest our hosts to greet.

Yet, when the ringing bells would prove
 The Sabbath's wonted sign,
Aware with us he must not move,
 He'd tranquilly recline ;

Prompt in our cause his aid to lend,
And zealous service show;
Wagging his welcome to a friend,
But barking off a foe.

Grateful for kindly word or will,
Most patient when in pain,
With laboring breath, caressing still
The hand that would sustain !

And, if the grace of love and trust
Fit beings for the sky,
The spirit that informed that dust
May claim its place on high.

How this may be I cannot see,
Since there is none to show,
And those that frown such fancy down
Themselves as little know.

At least, I'M SURE, and make an end,
This marvel has occurred,
One funeral record has been penned
Without a flattering word !

THE WIFE OF SEATON:

O R,

T H E S I E G E O F B E R W I C K.

A N H I S T O R I C T R A G E D Y.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

ALEXANDER SEATON,	.....	<i>Governor of the Town.</i>
PATRICK DUNBAR,	.....	<i>Of the Castle.</i>
FRIAR.		
EDWARD III.,	.....	<i>King of England.</i>
MORDAUNT,	}	<i>His Envoys.</i>
NEVILLE,		
ATTENDANTS, &c.		
DONALDUS,	.....	<i>A Seer.</i>
LADY AGNES SEATON,	.....	<i>Wife to the Governor.</i>
MARGARET,	.....	<i>Her Attendant.</i>



I N V O C A T I O N .

GENIUS of Celtic Song ! who, high enthroned
Amid Iona's hallowed sepulchres,
Hath dread communings with a buried world !
Thou, who disowning all Ausonia yields
To fix poetic gaze — on contrasts strong
Of ruined grandeur and luxurious life,
Art's noblest forms decaying — tantalized
By ever blooming Nature, (where the rose
Flaunts through the chasms of Antonius' wall,
And balmy breezes sport, and laughing suns
Shine, as in mockery, o'er the fallen domes
Where once the Cæsars swayed !) from these hast turned
With Spartan scorn thy tread, to rear a seat
Far in the lone Ebudæ ; where, for voice
Of man or note of bird, no sound is heard
But the contending ocean's ceaseless roar
'Gainst the bold rock that dares oppose his force,
And breast, with craggy front, his onward way.

Genius of Celtic Song ! if haunts like these
Have power to win thee from the southern muse —
If, wedded to thy country still, thy soul
Prefer that bride, unportioned though she be,
With cliffs and deserts only for her dower,
To Tuscan vineyards or Hindostan groves —
If Scotia's native ruggedness of clime
From all refinements of a richer soil
Still hold thy constant heart — take then this lay,
To Scotia consecrate ! And should its tones
But wake one note accordant with the sounds
That oft have called thy mountain echoes forth
To speak the glories of thy native sons,
O, grant thine inspiration to the theme,
And give the muse that aid which can perform
Those miracles of chronicles and song —
Roll back the tide of far receded time,
Restore the Douglas days — awake the dead !

THE WIFE OF SEATON.

A C T I.

SCENE 1. *A room in the Governor's house. SEATON alone, leaning on a table covered with maps, plans, &c.*

SEATON.

My native country, what a fate is thine !
Thy Bruce no more, his infant son afar,
His faithful Regent treacherously slain,
His rival, Baliol, roused again to arm
In contest for the crown — scarred as thou art
With former wounds, and must thou bleed afresh,
From the remorseless blows of civil war ?
Yet more, those home-bred feuds have proved the heralds
Of foreign war, and now its best ally,
As these three ling'ring, suffering months can witness,
Since haughty Edward, with a chosen host,
Buckled his armor on and spurred his steed
To Berwick's menaced walls.

(Enter ATTENDANT.)

ATTENDANT.

My lord ! the envoys,
The British envoys seek you.

SEATON.

Strait admit them,
Then, Walter, to the castle's commandant,
Greet him from me, and ask his presence hither.

(Exit ATTENDANT. Enter NEVILLE and MORDAUNT.)

NEVILLE.

Hail we not here Sir Alexander Seaton,
The Governor of Berwick ?

SEATON.

You are right ;
I own the name and office, with the purpose
Ne'er to discredit either.

NEVILLE.

Be it so !
Like trait is ours in this our embassage.
We bear a message from our royal master,
Edward of England.

SEATON.

What hath England's king
For Seaton's hearing ?

MORDAUNT.

Even to demand
The town's surrender as our monarch's right,
And holden by his father's heretofore,
Ere farther loss of time, and wealth, and life,
Serve to impoverish you, exasperate him,
And make the path to future peace and concord
Less easy than the present. We have said.

SEATON.

I will convene the council, and impart
Promptly their answer; meantime, worthy Barons,
If such poor cheer as times like these allow
Meet your regard, betake you to our board.

NEVILLE.

We are beholden to your courtesy.

SEATON.

Myself the Lady Agnes will apprise
What guests do honor us. She hath a son,
Alas! within your custody, and doubtless
Will profit of your presence to indulge
A mother's fond inquiries. This way, sirs.

[*Exit.*

SCENE 2. *Another apartment.* MORDAUNT, NEVILLE *discovered*, to whom enter SEATON and DUNBAR.

SEATON.

Barons, the Scottish Council have decreed
That I should thus reply unto your mission :
Berwick was always ours, till thirst of power
Prompted your monarch's warlike ancestor
By violence to seize it ; but when Bruce,
Our glorious champion, won his country back
From its usurpers, Berwick with the rest
Resumed its ancient government and laws.
But more ; the right of conquest thus obtained,
By right of treaty was confirmed ; for, pressed
And counselled by the wise men of his land,
Four years ago your English King renounced
All right himself or his forefathers claimed
To Scotland's crown, and swore to leave its realm
Free as it was ere the contending claims
Of Bruce or Baliol rose, pressed by no yoke
Of foreign servitude ; even to return
All scrolls of compacts, bonds, or whatsoe'er
Might seem a vestige of a subject state ;
And, on our part, we promised to repay
A stipulated sum for those domains
By Edward and his sires possessed among us,

To yield to him our lands in England held,
And even to consider Stanmore's cross
Our utmost boundary. To fix this league
We farther fastened on the added tie
Of family and friend; our Prince espoused
The sister of your sovereign, and the names
Of Robert and of Henry to our ears
Were as the names of brothers.

Wherefore, then,
Have we been thus assailed with secret art
And open warfare, while ourselves in aught
Had ne'er infringed those articles of peace,
Nor would reject it now on any terms,
So they were honorable?

MORDAUNT.

Is this all?

SEATON.

This for your monarch; for yourselves, as missioned
To mediate between us, we would urge
A claim to favorable offices;
Such as may seem to you as but comporting
With duty to your country; well persuaded
You cannot prove yourselves less true to Edward
By being just to Scotland. You are answered.

MORDAUNT.

I am concerned our orders should insist
Plainly and positively on this point,
Stated at first — the rendering up of Berwick.

SEATON.

But, surely, you did not at first exact
Instant surrender.

NEVILLE.

Truly, no, we did not ;
And to the farthest we are authorized
To grant you, will we go. Take a given time ;
Name it yourself; till which, if no relief
Come to the garrison, (aware that soon
The Douglas will arrive,) you then consent
To yield it to our arms.

SEATON.

I must consent !
Unwilling howsoe'er. Too well you know
I have no choice. 'Tis now the thirteenth day
Of our midsummer month ; if ere the thirtieth
No succors reach the town from Douglas' force,
I yield it up.

MORDAUNT.

But further, our instructions
 Demand that, as a pledge for the performance
 Of this engagement on your part, your son,
 (Twin-born with him who now is pris'ner with us,)
 Be rendered for an hostage.

SEATON.

My poor Duncan !
 Must he, too, go ? His brother's early valor
 Already had betrayed him to captivity ;
 Must I be reft of both ?

DUNBAR.

You press us hardly ;
 As men, as knights, I put it to yourselves ;
 Are not these harsh conditions ?

NEVILLE.

'Tis not ours
 To make them easier ; though, to your discretion,
 I own the wish that they were otherwise.

MORDAUNT.

Our worthy host and his compeer are each
 Too well informed upon a soldier's duty
 Not to acknowledge it the part of such
 But to discharge their orders — not dispute them.

DUNBAR.

Yet soldiers do remonstrate ; aye, rebel,
When their own rights, or real or supposed,
Have seemed to be impaired ; their pay withheld ;
Their privileges lowered ; causes like these
Sometimes create such things as mutinies,
Even in English armies. But for injury
Done toward others — for a stranger's wrong —
Then to expect resistance or regret
Were all too high or low for sober manhood —
Chimerical or childish.

NEVILLE.

Little know ye
The mind of him we serve, if you imagine
That aught in us were prevalent to alter
His strenuous will, or check his dread resolve
On sovereignty here.

DUNBAR.

Vain expectation !

Can iron break the *northern* iron ? No !
Ours is yet harder metal than your own.
Witness the many shocks by which 'twas bent,
But never yet was riven. Your Roman master
Obtained no mastery here. His legions scaled
Our cliffs in vain ; and to his eagle's scream

Athwart our cliffs, was borne with echo back,
Answering defiance from our native eyrie.
Since then the like assault hath still received
The like discomfiture ; our frigid clime
Had reared a race too rough for the grim Norman
Or bloodier Dane to quell.

MORDAUNT.

The more the glory
If we succeed.

DUNBAR.

How far succeed, I pray ?
What if a castle fall, a town be taken ?
Dream not that Scotland is subdued ! that stake,
So long contested, cannot thus be won.
Behold the board whereon the game is played !
Look far and wide ; each rock shall prove a castle,
Each crag a tower, each cave a walled city ;
Ramparts of strength, on which the miner, Nature,
Hath wrought so secretly, and surely, too,
That human prowess vainly may assail
The superhuman barrier.

MORDAUNT.

Nay, go on ;
Stop not with Nature. Canst not tell us somewhat
Of marvels passing Nature, which your Celts
Have long had credit for ?

DUNBAR.

Did I think meet
 For tongue of sturdy soldier or the ear
 Of Christian knights to note such fantasies —
 For such they seem, albeit they may be more —
 There were enough to occupy more time
 Than, by the strictness of our several callings,
 Could now be warranted. Of sprites that haunt
 Our Caledonian forests, all their own,
 With nameless mischiefs for intruding alien ;
 Of shapes that people all our Highland mists,
 And spread its dimness on the eyes beneath
 They would bewilder ; of the goblin brood
 That prank them ever in our lochs and fens
 To lose the wanderer by the light that leads him.
 Enough of these.

NEVILLE.

But you did not include
 The strange pretensions of those bold diviners
 Who claim to call the future — and it cometh ?

DUNBAR.

True, Englishmen, I did not ; for, believe me,
 There's more of might, whate'er of mystery,
 In this than merits scoffing ; nor would I
 To stranger eyes expose a gift thus solemn ;
 The less that, peradventure, at some period,
 Themselves may mark its power.

(Enter DONALDUS behind, unperceived by all but Seaton.)

SEATON.

They mark it now.

DONALDUS.

Woe ! woe !

SEATON.

To whom denounced ?

To whom, Donaldus ?

DONALDUS.

To all ; to thee, good Seaton, even to thee !

Thou and thine house. The hovering pestilence
Strikes down the righteous with the reprobate.The dogs of war once out, the bloodhounds track
No less the anchorite in his hermitage

Than robber in his den. Woe, then, to Scotland !

And woe to England, too, the ruthless cause !

Woe to us all !

[Exit.]

DUNBAR.

It is the gifted seer,
 Who, hand in hand with dark Futurity,
 Sees that, to others without form and void,
 Moulded to shape, and fraught with circumstance.

NEVILLE.

Truly, an awful presence ! felt you not (*to MORDAUNT*)
 As with the disembodied ?

MORDAUNT.

But, my comrade,
 Be that as may, our business toucheth not
 The world of spirits, but concerneth merely
 Such an inferior sphere, that I would counsel
 We put the warning to some present use ;
 Letting it hasten us in our leave-taking,
 Soon as the Governor prepare his hostage
 To bear us company.

SEATON.

I'll not detain you ;
 What must be, must ! Go with me now.

DUNBAR.

Then, sirs,
 Fare you well, hence, in all but your attempts
 Against my country.

NEVILLE.

With like reservation,
 Prosperity to you.

MORDAUNT.

Good Commandant,
 The same from me.

[*Exit all.*

ACT II.

SCENE 1. *The interior of Berwick Castle.* DUNBAR discovered, to whom enters the FRIAR.

FRIAR.

Save you, son!

I do attend your summons, and would now
Inquire its cause.

DUNBAR.

The troops of Douglas, father,
Have just arrived, in sight of friends and enemies,
And halted on the Hill of Halidon.

FRIAR.

St. Andrew speed them! This is welcome news.

DUNBAR.

Aye, father, but the news is overburdened
With heaviest tidings for our worthy Governor.
The faithless king, despite his stipulation
To stay proceedings till the day appointed,
And reckless of the truce yet unexpired,
Has sent a threat unless the place be yielded,
That he will order summary execution
On both the sons of Seaton.

FRIAR.

Barbarous monster !

What must — what *can* be done ?

DUNBAR.

I stopped the herald

Before he reached the wretched Governor,
And took upon myself to bear the message ;
That, haply, it be told him in some manner
Shorn of its first ferocity. For this
Did I despatch the page to you, good father,
To ask this Christian service at your hands,
That you would break the matter as you may
Unto the parents of these fated children.

FRIAR.

Well may I shudder at my woeful errand,
Yet must not shrink from it. But what dost think ?
Will Seaton —

DUNBAR.

Ask me not — I cannot think,
Cannot advise, in circumstance thus shocking.
No sire myself, how could I counsel others
To that which I can ne'er be called to suffer ?
How estimate such call ? It were presumptuous !
Nay, it were obdurate ! Well you know that Seaton
Is worthiest of the worthy ; brave, yet sage ;

Sparing, albeit, in words, but full in judgment ;
With wariest caution, skilled to counteract
The inconsiderate sallies of the rash,
And to conciliate the feuds of others
By the example of his own forbearance.
All this he is ; and if he have a weakness,
'Tis for his sons — as, sometimes, the best blades
May yield the most — the proudest, tenderest parent ;
Fond, e'en to dotage ; (and, in truth, the bantlings
Do well become it;) hence, I doubt his course,
In exigence so sharp, and my reliance
Leans with more fixedness upon his consort.

FRIAR.

The noble Agnes !

DUNBAR.

To her ghostly guardian
I need not urge how well the loftier traits
Of an heroic soul are blent in hers,
With all the touching tenderness of woman.

FRIAR.

I long have noted it.

DUNBAR.

So have I, from the first. My own near kinswoman,
And, had my fortune favored, I had aimed
To make her somewhat nearer; failing that,
I do rejoice her lot has fallen to one
Who, far as man can merit, merits her,
And willingly could forfeit one poor life
But to have kept from both an hour like this!

FRIAR.

These sufferings of the good, my son, are mysteries
Beyond our fathoming.

DUNBAR.

They are so, father.
Now to our several tasks. Thou to the Seatons,
I to attend the herald, whose safe conduct
I must inspect, lest the exasperate sentinel
Should follow Edward's lead, and disregard
The known immunities of time and person.

SCENE 2. *The front of the castle. Enter DONALDUS.*

DONALDUS.

Ah, sinful Scotland! 'tis thine own offences
That toss thee now with tempests. Had thy sons
Been true to thee and to themselves, and proved
A hardy brotherhood, still leagued together
For mutual weal or woe, rather than prowled,
A horde of bandits, bent against each other
In predatory warfare — then, indeed,
What could have wrought them harm? had they not stretched
(Blinded by wrath) their hands toward the stranger,
To battle in their broils — the stranger, then,
Had not, as now, become the general spoiler,
In justest retribution! Watchful Edward
Hailed in disunion's hour his hour of triumph,
And to the horrors of the home-brewed storm
That lowered around the genius of the North,
Sent from abroad his thunders, to combine,
Gather and burst, in bolts of final ruin.
So his own Cornwall's craggy coast has shown
Yet harder hearts and rougher hands, to snatch
E'en from the shipwrecked prey of winds and waves
The refuse of the elements! So, too,
What time the frightened Lusian, forced to fly
From crash of falling tower, leaves all for life,

The daring robber rushes to his home
To rifle what the whelming earth had spared !

[*Pauses, then starts and speaks.*

Whence comes this darkling mist, that riseth round me
So chill and ominous ? and — mighty powers
Of earth or air ! what means that shadowy scaffold,
And those dim forms that fill it ? Spare them, Edward !
But for the sake of thine own flesh and blood !
For thy soul's sake, be not the slaughtering Herod
To innocents like these ! It all disperses.
Can this be fiendish juggling, or, indeed,
A boding from on high ?

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

SCENE 1. *An oratory.* LADY AGNES SEATON kneeling before a representation of the Blessed Virgin.

LADY AGNES.

OH holy Mary, hear and answer me !
 A miserable mother, lo ! I come
 To spread my griefs before thee. Blessed One,
 Though now thou art with heaven's beatitude,
 I call on thee by the remembered pangs
 That once were thine on earth ; by the sharp sorrows
 That pierced, as with a sword, through thy own soul ;
 As thou hast known a parent's deadly anguish,
 To feel for mine !

"Tis unavailing all !
 E'en prayer relieves not.

(Enter FRIAR.)

FRIAR.

Peace be with you, daughter !

LADY AGNES.

O, father, mock me not with words like these !
 Peace can be mine no more.

FRIAR.

The peace of Heaven,
If not of earth ; full rarely they agree ;
And thus the soul that compasseth the one
Must oft renounce the other.

LADY AGNES.

I have sought it ;
Have been imploring succor from on high ;
But Heaven and earth alike conspire against me,
And all is dark above — below — around !

FRIAR.

O, say not thus ! these clouds are earth-engendered.
'Tis from our saddened thoughts the mists arise
And dim the tearful vision, intercepting
The Light above, thence deemed to hide itself,
Though shining still forever and the same ;
E'en as the restless world turned from the sun,
And when the night succeeded, lo ! 'twas deemed
The sun had turned from them. She heeds me not. (*Aside.*)
Lady, as is my office and my wont,
I came to solace and to strengthen thee
With words of ghostly comfort ; but, I know not,
The sight of thy sore suffering hath unmanned me,
And what I would I lack the heart to utter.

LADY AGNES.

Father, I own and thank thy sympathy.
All that a mortal can to mortal lend
I know thou dost ; but never lot like mine
Called forth thy kindly services, for none
Was ever tried like me.

FRIAR.

Think, daughter, think
Upon the Syrian of our sacred records,
The ancient patriarch of the chosen race,
Called to destroy the son in whom alone
That race could be continued.

LADY AGNES.

Such a sacrifice
Had never been demanded from a mother.*
The sire may proudly, fondly love his son ;
(Full well I know it by the bitter case
Of my own gallant, broken-hearted Seaton;) ;
But, to the tenderness of manlier natures,
The mother adds, moreover, new affections,
Whose height and depth no being but herself
And Him who gave them to her comprehendeth.

* This sublime answer was actually made to a French monk, when urging a mother to resignation by the mention of Abraham.

FRIAR.

Lady, I doubt it not.

LADY AGNES.

Then, think that I
 Am called to speak the doom of — do I live
 To think it, even? — not of one alone,
 But both my precious boys; my dutious ones;
 That I, their mother — for it falls on me,
 Since Seaton's mind, torn with conflicting claims,
 Station, paternity, and patriotism,
 (The rent sail, shiv'ring in the shifting blast,) —
 Turns to my own to speak the words of fate.
 Mother, forsooth! Ha, am I such, good father?
 A fitting task for such!

FRIAR.

I pray thee, talk not
 So very terribly. (Not since the burial
 Of Bruce's royal heart in Palestine
 Knew I as dark an hour.)

LADY AGNES.

I've heard the learned
 Tell of that Colchis woman — one Medea —
 Who killed! — dost shudder, father? — killed her children.
 Wouldst thou believe it? If men doubt the fact,
 Let them look here, and gain the fell conviction.

FRIAR.

O, think not for an instant, noble Agnes,
 To liken thee with her. She was a sorceress ;
 Fair incarnation of a fiend most foul ;
 Who, to the guilty flame that fired her spirit,
 Shamed not to sacrifice her sons ; whilst thou
 But yieldest thine to meet the sacred cry
 Thy country sends to thee. 'Twas hers to loose
 The vilest passions — thine, to bind the best.

LADY AGNES.

But men will note the sameness of the fact,
 The direful fact, nor stay to scan the motive.
 All are not calm, like such as we, good father,
 To make the due distinction. But, thou saidst
 (Or my dull sense deceived) somewhat of country.
 I've said the same within my conscious soul ;
 But then the tempter cometh, to remonstrate,
 "What doth a woman with her country's weal,
 Whose world is her own home, her fireside group,
 Kindred and friends?" And then he whispereth, "*Pride*,
 Belike, unseemly and unsexly pride,
 Misleading by the name of heroism,
 Hurls me and mine to this abyss." Is 't so ?
 O, tell me, father ! prove it be but pride,
 And I will bless thy name forevermore !

FRIAR.

Resist the arch one, lady. These dark hours
He ever seizes for his own ; to conflicts
Of flesh and blood still superadding those
Of wrestling with bad spirits ; thus to crush
The overburdened mortal. But for thee,
Noble and virtuous dame, I have petitioned,
And hope for better things. The pride thus called
Were heathen ! nay, were hellish ! like his own ;
Unlike the gentle and benignant bearing
That, from the innocence of infancy
To thy devout and gracious womanhood,
Hath still characterized thee.

LADY AGNES.

So I trusted,
Till the misgivings of this evil time.
Surely, the lure of Fame could not have led me ;
Her note, they say, is gladdening to the sense ;
Not like that stern and solemn voice of duty
That called me — calls me still. 'Tis near the moment
When I must meet my husband. I but asked,
For orison at this our Lady's shrine,
And to commune with you, my reverend father,
An hour's delay. One fearful interview
With him is past — the next — and all is over.
But will it e'er be over ? Never, never !

FRIAR.

St. Andrew's blessing go along with thee,
And guard thy high resolve !

[*Clock strikes.*

LADY AGNES.

Hark ! 'tis the hour ! (*Starts up.*)

These tremblings now ? (*sits.*) Yet, yet I may not linger,
Though life or reason reel. I must not leave
My lord in his extremity — but who
Will be with *them* in theirs ? O, horror ! horror !

[*Clasps her hands, and rushes out.*

FRIAR, (*alone.*)

That task shall be my care. I would not hazard
The fresh emotion to her o'erwrought feelings
Of telling mine intention, but hereafter,
The conflict past, 't will prove to her a solace
To know I shrived them for their last account ;
My sacred function will protect my person ;
If not, my life is vowed unto my Master ;
To lose it in his cause, the cause of charity,
Would be to gain the crown of martyrdom.

[*Exit.*

SCENE 2. *A room in the Governor's house, (with folding-doors back of the scene.) SEATON discovered, to whom enters LADY AGNES.*

LADY AGNES.

My honored lord hath said, in other times,
My presence brought him comfort ; now, alas !
Agnes hath none to offer.

SEATON.

Say not so ;
Community is comfort, even in wretchedness.
But of thy mind — what of thy mind, my wife ?
My own 's unstable as the ebbs and flows
Of Solway's current.

LADY AGNES.

Thou wilt hate me, Seaton,
When I disclose it.

SEATON.

Ha ! sets the stream that way ?
Woman ! canst thou ?

LADY AGNES.

Nay, hearken to me first,
And then, canst thou ?

SEATON.

Go on !

LADY AGNES.

I bore those bairns, giving them life, thou know'st,
 With half the loss of mine. (Had it but been—
 Would it had been—the whole!) Parts of myself,
 And nourished by myself—within mine arms,
 Or at my bosom ever, day and night,
 In health or ailment—thou canst witness for me,
 No weariness or watching e'er o'erpowered
 My ministering vigils.

SEATON.

'Tis most true,
 My tried and faithful Agnes! Oft I chid
 Thy ceaseless carefulness.

LADY AGNES.

Their opening forms
 To my rapt gaze seemed infant deities,
 And their first lisplings fell upon my ear
 Sweeter than angel voices. (Hold, my heart!
 These memories will melt me! When I need
 The hardness of the rock, am I become
 Like water?)

SEATON.

None can like myself avouch
 What thou hast ever been and done, my love;
 But is not this an argument to spare
 The purchase of such pangs?

LADY AGNES.

I did not mean
An idle vaunt thus to bespeak thy praise,
However precious. That which then was done
Now seems too little. They deserved it all,
The darlings — pshaw! this childishness again?
What I had meant to say, before this theme
Bewitched me with its fond remembrances,
Was, that if I, a mother, (and, thou own'st,
A kindly one,) give up my being's right
In theirs, 't is surely no impeachment, then,
Of thy paternal tenderness, that thou
Should set the seal upon the sacrifice.

SEATON.

The sacrifice! and dost thou know its worst?
Not death alone; but such a death, my Agnes!
The place, the mode — the gibbet and the cord!
The felon's fate! Agnes, 't were double death
To die thus vilely.

LADY AGNES.

The like fate attended
Our peerless Wallace. What he bore unblemished
Can ne'er disparage those who after him
Tread the same path to heaven.

SEATON.

Alas! alas!

LADY AGNES.

Thou needs not put it to thy loyalty.
Thou hast a king, though young, and far away,
Son of the Bruce, (and destined, as we trust,
To prove his lineage by his future deeds,)
For whom his faithful subjects all are bound
To keep his royal heritage unspoiled ;
Nor yet to urge upon thy patriot heart
The sacred claim of country to be held
Back from th' invader's grasp ; still less to cite
(All which thou know'st far better than myself)
What I have gathered from the wise discoursing —
Of those, that chronicles of old attest,
To aid the fortunes of the failing state
Gave up themselves and theirs. Our later days
Showed as good samples, where a single household
Sufficed to turn the adverse tide of war.

SEATON.

No, I forget them not. Thou mean'st the Hayes.

LADY AGNES.

Yes, those three men — of humble station, then,
Though since assigned, as meed for their exploit,
Rank with the highest — those three husbandmen,
Father and sons, who, laboring on the glebe,
Rushed with their rustic implements of toil,
The spade, the harrow, whatso'er they held,
To stop the flight of their retreating countrymen —
Driving them back upon the enemy,
Thence to return as conquerors !

SEATON.

They deserved
The fame that followed them, and I will own
Such fame were dear ; yet are my sons far dearer.

LADY AGNES.

Think not the loss of that alone I heed,
Though that were much ; the burning brand of infamy
Might yet be quenched, by others or ourselves ;
Not so the inward, inextinguished fire,
Still scorching, ne'er consuming. Voice of man,
Without us, may capriciously award
Its censure or acclaim, and we contemn it ;
But of man's Maker, in us, who shall scorn ?

SEATON.

I own its hallowed sanction to thy pleadings.

LADY AGNES.

Besides, if thou desert thy trust, and thus
Betray the sons of all the sires in Scotland
To save thine own, blotting the fair escutcheon
Worn by thine ancestry unsoiled till now ;—
Bethink thee, after all, if thou be sure
To gain the guerdon ? to deliver those
For whom all else were forfeited ? Not so !
For if, in mockery of the faith of treaties,
Of his own covenant, the tyrant now
Has broke his oath — who knows but then he fail
To spare the captives, and thou sow'st the wind
Only to reap the whirlwind !

SEATON.

Hold, in mercy !

LADY AGNES.

Think, too, my Seaton, we have other children.

SEATON.

None other half so dear.

LADY AGNES.

None dearer, sure. The absent and the dead
Are ever most delighted in—and justly.
The heart must seek to compensate itself,
When past the power to pour it forth in act,
By hoarding larger measures of affection.
So let it be with them !

SEATON.

Thy solemn words
Fall like a requiem ! Hast thou more to move me ?

LADY AGNES.

Nought of my own ; but, could I summon others,
There are, whose words to second my appeal,
Were more prevailing.

SEATON.

Who could be thus gifted ?

Say, who ?

LADY AGNES.

The lads themselves !
Start not ! 'tis true ! Stood they before us now,
Themselves to hold the balance, and their doom
The weight depending, confident I am
Allan and Duncan are no sons of ours
But they would beg thee not to spare their lives

At peril of their honor; would prefer
 To die, the offspring of an honest man,
 Than live a traitor's heirs! And dost thou shrink
 At the mere name? Think of the thing, my Seaton!
 And let it nerve thee to the only course
 By which thou canst avoid it.

SEATON.

Thou hast won me;
 Hast conquered, Agnes! Thou hast gained thy husband,
 But lost thy sons!

*[Falls on her neck, when, suddenly catching a glance
 at the side scene, she screams and sinks back.]*

What means that fearful shriek?

LADY AGNES.

A sudden pang. Within. (*pointing to the folding-doors.*)

Send Margaret hither.

I shall be better soon, and come to thee.

[SEATON goes into the inner room.]

(Enter MARGARET.)

*[LADY AGNES, starting up, snatches the hand of MARGARET, and points with it to
 the view through the side scene.]*

LADY AGNES.

'Tis there, already. Look! the fatal tree!
 Beneath our walls — within our very sight!
 I sped my husband hence, ere he beheld
 What might have blunted all his resolution.

Barbarian Edward ! could thy savage heart
Contrive this aggravation ? Curses on thee !
On thee and thine. Take, ruthless spoiler, take
A mother's malison. O, may it reach thee !
Follow through life and haunt thee at thy death !
And let it cleave the tomb, and pierce beneath,
Keen as a falchion, till it find the hell
To which thy crimes shall sink thee, and dire Heaven
Deaf to thy cries, as thou wert deaf to mine !

[*Falls exhausted into the arms of MARGARET. Curtain drops.*

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

ACT IV.

SCENE 1. *The grounds belonging to the Governor's house.* LADY AGNES, disordered. MARGARET following.

LADY AGNES.

Follow me not ; I go to seek my sons.
Dost hear me, girl ? Let go my hand ! My sons
Are in the camp ; no place for such as thee.
My errand is a lone one.

MARGARET.

Dearest lady,
Drive me not from you !

LADY AGNES.

Fie on't ! Margaret.
Wouldst have me trust a decent Scottish lassie
With Edward's lawless soldiery ? Thy mistress
Is bound to better care of thee, poor Margaret.
Wait thou until thy maiden snood be doffed
For matron coif. Even such as I, myself,
May shudder at the enterprise ; these English
Have grown so pitiless ! Thou canst not know
How pitiless — nor will they let me tell thee —
The leech forbade it ; did he not ?

MARGARET.

Yes, lady ;
He bade me keep you quieted.

LADY AGNES.

Most truly.
Well, we must do his bidding. I'll but whisper —
These English are so fell they neither spare
Mother nor children. Children ! that reminds me
My own are waiting me in yonder camp,
While I am loit'ring here ; my bright-eyed Allan
And my dark Duncan. Ha ! in yonder camp ?
What do they there ? Art tampering with the foe ?
I tell thee, Margaret, if the lads are traitors
Then they are none of mine. 'Tis some mistake !
Mine were true men.

MARGARET.

The Friar will soon return,
And tell us, lady, all concerning them.
(*Aside.*) (I am content her wanderings take this turn ;
It may beguile her to repose awhile,
Which she so greatly needs for restoration
To wonted sanity.) The pious father
Will shortly bring us tidings from the camp,
Upon whose word we know you can rely.

LADY AGNES.

Truly, so can I ; thou sayest well, my Margaret.
No more discreet an handmaid can attend
On any dame. 'Tis fittest we await
The Friar's return, to ascertain this matter,
Ere we depart on an uncertain quest.
Meantime, let me betake me to my couch,
And tell my beads. Lend me thy arm, my girl.

SCENE 2. *The armory of the castle.* DUNBAR and the FRIAR
conversing.

FRIAR.

I did fear me this.

DUNBAR.

Yes, she sustained the task appointed her
Unfaltering to the end ; but, that accomplished,
The copious tide of nature, long pent up,
Burst forth at once, and overwhelmed the reason.
Like as, when pierced to death, the dauntless Theban
Kept in the javelin till the day was won —
Then life gushed with it !

FRIAR.

Thus it ever is.

Ah, that it should be thus with poor mortality,
 Even at the highest ! The weak frame gives way,
 Though the firm purpose fail not ; but hereafter
 The spirits of the saints, we may believe,
 (Freed from a world scarce worthy of their stay,)
 Shall gain befitting forms, with a duration
 Eternal, as the souls inspiring them.

DUNBAR.

Our Lady grant it.

FRIAR.

Yes, the shrinking nerve,
 Not then, as now, perchance, shall counteract
 “Th’ unconquerable will ;” that the strong man,
 Armed at all points against a foreign foe,
 Shall start aghast to see himself subdued
 By his own flesh and blood ! the pilgrim faints
 Beneath the penance he must yet perform
 At peril of his soul, and the rough soldier —

DUNBAR.

Aye, father, has thy moralizing creed
 A saving plea for cowards ? for, if so,
 Son of the church, and duteous as I may be,

I hardly shall respond to it ; the less
At such a time of need for dauntless hearts
In our beleaguered realm.

FRIAR.

I had foreseen
Thy soldierly protest, heroic Dunbar,
Nor would it suit, in this emergency,
To preach such doctrine to the famished troops
Of either garrison — thy castle's charge,
Or hapless Seaton's — but, in calmer moments,
I ask it of the conscience of that chieftain
Who ever closely communed with himself
Whether he have not found a subtle something
That strove to curb his mettle, and anon
Cried “craven” to his prowess ? that, repressed,
Returned with powers repaired, e'en as the reptile,
Though once dissevered, rallies yet again
With fangs renewed ? or rather, like the fiend,
(If such may now be suffered to possess us,
As sacred records teach they did of old,)
Who, once expelled, came back with seven-fold powers
Confederate with himself, to wreak his will ?

DUNBAR.

I bow me to thy holy record, father,
Howe'er, as commandment of Berwick castle,
Strenuous to disallow the application
That shelters timorous natures ; all too many
Of such our bastion doth enclose already,
Fled here, perforce, for safety from the foe.
The anxious matron and the trembling maid ;
The worn-out veteran, whose encumb'ring limb
(As if in mockery of its former strength)
Hangs withered now—a dead and useless weight ;
And the poor child, whose utmost stretch of height
Scarce gains his grandsire's knee ; whose height of hope
Already reaches what his grandsire was !
But the effective force that guardeth these
Is all too small, in view of Edward's numbers,
To need enfeebling dogmas ; yet I grant
There's weight within your words ; and these wars over,
When I have leisure to look o'er my conscience,
If the survey disclose to me such lurkers
As those whose ambush you so well denote,
Lowly at thy confessional, good father,
Will I my breast unbare till thou absolve me.

FRIAR.

'Tis frankly said, and I accept the pledge
Freely as given. Meanwhile, mistake me not.
Neither the frost of age, nor cloister's chill,
Hath frozen yet the blood within these veins
That once hath burned upon the battle-field,
Alas ! too hotly ! But the helm and corslet
Possessed the man before the cowl and gown.
My breath, while lent, shall fan, and not extinguish
The fire of action ; but, that action done,
Should strive to temper the delirious pulse
Of human exultation, in the hour
Of its wild triumph, by recalling, then,
The conscious thought to tranquilize its throbs ;
And silently impart that touch of humbleness
That lends a grace to honor.

(Enter ATTENDANT.)

ATTENDANT.

Reverend father,
The Lady Agnes Seaton, so far healed,
The saints be praised ! of her late malady,
Took note of thy return, directing me
To crave thy presence.

FRIAR.

Bear my blessing to her,
 And tell the noble lady she confirmeth
 My previous purpose of a conference
 Soon as her strength allowed.

[Exit ATTENDANT.]

(To DUNDAR.)

I have good hope
 That my narration of the constancy
 With which her youthful martyrs met their fate,
 How sad soe'er, may yet be salutary
 To the condition of the noble mourner ;
 Healing the broken heart-strings that had snapped
 From over tension.

DUNBAR.

Sights like these, good father,
 Have lessened my repining at my portion,
 When — as a lonely man, beholding none
 My name may rest upon when I resign it —
 Tempted to discontent, in those brief hours
 A soldier steals from warfare.

FRIAR.

Yes, my son,
 Though selfish be the thought, and subject after
 For mortifying penance, I have found,
 In my own case, the sworn celibacy

Enjoined our sect a rule less burdensome,
When called to witness those domestic sorrows
My duty bids me comfort.

DUNBAR.

Even so.

And I as well may magnify my lot,
Lauding it as the choice of knights and saints,
Pilgrim and priest ; and if, at times, the thought
Still prick me like a thorn within the flesh,
That in reserve no progeny of prattlers
Shall cheer my dotage — 'tis a far-off day !
And, thanks to Edward and his minion Baliol,
Few of us may be left to fill the seats
Of reverend eldership.

FRIAR.

Till when, and ever,
In all conditions, *benedicite !*

[*Exit.*

(Enter SEATON.)

SEATON.

My worthy Dunbar will not think it strange
If late his comrade, borne down with the weight
Of individual burden, lacked the power
To hold discourse upon the common interest.

DUNBAR.

That common interest who so well had cared for
As thy much-injured self, my suffering friend ?

SEATON.

But now I would be aided by thy judgment.
What saith it to this aspect of affairs ?

DUNBAR.

That they have reached their crisis ; or, at least,
Inevitably must, in no long time.

The mighty forces mustered by the foe
On sea and land, when brought to bear at once
Upon our wasted town and shattered fortress,
Must prove resistless ; neither can I gather
(More than yourself, I think,) much hope from Douglas.

SEATON.

Grant Heaven his coming be not ominous
To all, as to myself ! its doleful consequences
To me and mine may cloud, perchance, my judgment.

DUNBAR.

No. It has proved, as yet, disastrous merely ;
Provoked his foes, and done his friends no good.

SEATON.

And yet, one should not willingly prejudge
A great and gallant name ; but, in the case
Of Archibald Douglas, will it be dispraise
To own that I distrust his very virtues,
Deeming him over brave ? a quality,
(I need not say,) in circumstance like ours,
Worse than its abject opposite.

DUNBAR.

To this

Add, that albeit he love his country much,
He hates his enemy yet more ; which, paired
With that false shame lest he be deemed inert,
(Our reverend Friar would call a snare,) may tempt him
To peril all, and risk a general battle.

SEATON.

And lose it, Dunbar ! Yes, my soul forebodes
Such for the issue. After all our struggles,
Is such the stern decree ? And Bruce has warred
And Wallace died for this, and this alone !
Is all in vain, and Scotland doomed to follow
In the long funeral of departed nations
Whose being ended ere her own began ?

DUNBAR.

No, no! believe it not!

SEATON.

Or, if forbade
By policy — not pity — to be struck
From off the roll of states, is she reserved
The more degraded lot to hold existence
The feudatory servitor of England,
And the rapacious and remorseless wretch
That sways her sceptre ?

DUNBAR.

Neither fate, I trust,
Awaits our country. The foe may enter,
But can he keep its borders? Will fair Tweed
E'er settle to a tributary stream?
Or Cheviot long look down on any lord
Save one of Scotland's rearing? No, my friend.
The native heather, that bent awhile
Beneath the pressure of a foreign tread,
Shall wave as free as ever. Though the soldier
Is not to play the seer, yet may he judge
The future from the past; from what has been
Gather what is to be. And if "the days

Of open vision" have not dawned on me,
 As on Donaldus, yet, from boyhood's hour,
 I ne'er beheld our mountain cataract,
 In giant-leap from heights the eagle knew not
 To depths past human ken — our island surge,
 Still roaring to the deafened Hebrides —
 But that my spirit sprang, as if their bold
 Unearthly voice had sworn to us a freedom
 Wild as their own.

SEATON.

Would I might share thy faith !
 Ah, Dunbar ! 't is the cheerful character
 Of thy own mind that ever coloresh thus
 The scenery it surveyed. My darkened spirit
 From the same sounds would catch the groans of bondage
 Or the sharp death-cry ! Bear with me, my friend,
 As the survivor of a recent wreck,
 The raving tempest clamorous in his ears
 When calmed to all beside.

DUNBAR.

Doth Berwick own
 A heart that would not "bear" and bleed with his
 Whose own has thus been wrung ?

SEATON.

For thine, at least,
I ask no guarantee. Now let's away.
I must have sight of Agnes.

DUNBAR.

And I follow.

[*Exit.*

SCENE 3. *The apartment of LADY AGNES SEATON. Herself and the Friar in conversation.*

LADY AGNES.

Now, holy father, blessings on thy head,
Here and hereafter, for that charity !

FRIAR.

In aught to comfort thee hath more than paid me.

LADY AGNES.

I did not think ever to weep again,
But thou hast touched the spring within the rock,
And healing waters flow.

(Enter DUNBAR and SEATON.)

SEATON.

How fares my Agnes?

How is it with thee now?

LADY AGNES.

Better, my lord;

And not unmindful of the kind solicitude

That prompts the asking.

SEATON.

I could not rely

On the reports they of the household brought,

But stole a moment from the cares of office,

(Though at the heaviest now,) to satisfy me.

DUNBAR.

I, too, a respite snatch from the like duties,

To hail my precious cousin's restoration;

And, in the name of Berwick and of Scotland,

To thank that pair to whom all thanks are due.

SEATON.

Pay them to her. None to myself are owing

To Agnes, only, doth that debt belong.

LADY AGNES.

(*To SEATON.*) Nay, prithee, nay ! (*to DUNBAR*) and if it
[were so, kinsman,

Thou know'st it chanceth for the fragile skiff
Sometimes to bear itself above the waves
From very lightness — when the braver bark,
Borne down by its rich freight and pressed with sail,
Had well-nigh parted.

DUNBAR.

Such lowly estimate of thy own merits
Does but enhance the worth it seeks to lower.

LADY AGNES.

Forbear ! my friend, thy plaudits overpower me.
Even with the duty done, so highly rated,
Mingled enough to shame the sense of pride !
A dark and stormy interval has left
Its clouds between me and my memory,
Spreading o'er much a dreamy indistinctness ;
Yet I recall — albeit confusedly —
I do remember, in my agony,
(That cast me, as a prey, to frantic impulse,)
Venting strange words of fearful imprecation.

I would they were unsaid ! 'Tis not for me,
 O, not for me, a weak and tempted woman,
 (Daughter of dust, which every breath is bearing
 Back to its source,) to teach the steadfast Heavens
 Where to direct their thunders ! O, forbid it !
 If, in my frenzy, I have cursed King Edward,
 I do revoke —

(DONALDUS, *entering, speaks.*)

DONALDUS.

In vain ! 'tis registered !
 Eternal retribution is concerned
 It should be so, howe'er thy generous nature
 Relenteth thus toward so fell a foe.
 The righteous wrath of man hath sometimes proved
 Prompting of Providence ; the cry of anguish
 Forced from the tortured spirit (like the groan
 Wrung from the writhing martyr on the rack)
 Is heard of Heaven ; aye, heard and answered, too !
 Thy curse shall fasten, yet, on him and his,
 Sharp as the eagle's talons ! and I go
 To warn him of it.

[*Exit DONALDUS.*

SEATON.

Did I hear aright ?

And dares he front that merciless destroyer
In his own place ?

DUNBAR.

Donaldus is not one
To fear the face of man — of guilty man
The least of any — since to such his tidings
Of solemn import may be most effectual
To probe past crimes, or to preserve from future.
But time has sped, and I must leave you, cousin,
And seek a ruder presence.

SEATON.

True, my Agnes ;
Yes, our short furlough has expired already.
I do commend thee to thy own best caution,
And leave thee, dearest, to the care of Heaven,
And this, its holy minister.

FRIAR.

Her comfort,
My son, shall be my care. The saints direct you,
(*To S. and D.*) Giving to each good fortune, or the grace
That draws the sting from bad !

LADY AGNES.

Amen; so be it!

Husband and kinsman, all good go with you!

[*Exit SEATON and DUNBAR.*

FRIAR.

Daughter, thine ancient harper had produced
 His wonted tribute of a brief lament
 To suit thy circumstance; but did reserve it
 Until the season of bewilderment
 Had passed away, and left thee to thyself.
 But now, wilt please thee listen to his lay,
 Whene'er the mood shall favor?

LADY AGNES.

It will soothe me,
 To hear the strain whose burden is to be
 Of what I loved and lost. Within the oratory
 We will await it.

[*Exit both.*

(*Scene changes to the oratory. LADY AGNES, FRIAR, HARPER.*)

LADY AGNES.

(*To HARPER.*) Mine ancient follower, I am now prepared
 To lend the funeral chant thy zeal hath offered
 A renovated ear. The holy father
 Made known to me this proof of fealty,
 My good old Gildus! that my heart has answered,
 And thanks thee, for the living — and the dead!

HARPER.

My noble mistress will permit the purpose
To hide the faultiness of the performance.
For the poor minstrel felt his wonted fires
Quenched by his tears. The broken voice of age
Hath little melody at best—but less
When grief would choke its utterance. Yet the strains,
Such as they are, shall wake them at thy bidding.

(*Sings, accompanied by the harp. During the strain LADY AGNES covers her face with her hand.*)

They are gone; they are gone from the hearth and the home;
To the hall of their fathers no more can they come;
In the bloom of their youth, in the light of their prime,
Ere the tempests of life or the shadows of time,
They are gone !

No more shall the hind hear their call at the morn,
Nor the stag start, when echo their bugle hath borne ;
Not again wave the plumes that in battle they wore,
Nor their arm bears the banner their forefathers bore.

No more, no more !

Yet their names shall be lofty as Scotia's high pine,
Live as long as the oak, and as green as the vine ;
In their lives they were lovely, nor death would dissever—
Not divided, as wont, but united them ever !

Forever !

(*The Friar now rises and joins the chant of the Harper.*)

By all the blood the martyrs shed,
By relics of the sainted dead,
By pilgrim's penitential tear,
By knighthood's consecrated bier,
Be their frailties here forgiven !
Let their spirits rest in heaven !

[*Curtain falls.*

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

ACT V.

SCENE 1. *The English camp before Berwick. A distant view of the town, castle, river, with its vessels of war, &c.*

Tent of EDWARD III.

(Enter DONALDUS, advancing, and speaks.)

DONALDUS.

Why ever thus, when called to exercise
My awful function, feel I such reluctance ?
The dread decrees I utter are not mine,
And I believe them fully merited
And equitably ordered. Spite of this,
The weakness lingers still. Would that the prophet
Had mastered more the man ! A Voice, they call me ;
Would I were but a voice ! I should not then —
Appointed to confront this throned transgressor
Just reeking from the gory spectacle
To angels and to men his wrath had raised —
Be conscious to aught other than his crimes,
Nor reck their threatened penal expiation.
Yes, let me think on the unnumbered wrongs
His mad career of conquest hath inflicted

Already on the land — the many more
 He meditates — till it shall rouse to rage
 The spirit of the North, and raise within me
 All the avenger.

[Goes to the entrance of the tent.]

Edward of England !

EDWARD.

Who art thou, bold one ?

DONALDUS.

Edward of England !

EDWARD.

Ha ! what rash intruder
 Invades our presence thus ? Where are my guards ?

DONALDUS.

Thy guards are vigilant ; but they shrank back
 When they regarded me.

(NEVILLE enters to them and speaks.)

NEVILLE.

My liege, 'tis he ;
 That awful One I spake of. (*To the king.*)

EDWARD.

In Heaven's name !

What art thou, man ?

DONALDUS.

I am the voice of one
 To thee, O king, sent from the King of kings,
 To speak thy doom. And I, too, am a monarch,
 And wield a sceptre ; though no outward ensigns
 Blazon it forth. The Future is my kingdom !
 I stretch my sceptre o'er its darkling realm,
 Which none can wrest from me ; the arm that seeks it
 Must borrow weapons from archangel's armory —
 Michael, or Gabriel !

EDWARD.

To the proof, vain boaster !
 I dare the utmost that the Prince of Darkness
 Speaks by that lying tongue.

DONALDUS.

Blasphemer ! pause ;
 'Tis truth, as sure as thine adulterous mother
 Murdered thy recreant father !

EDWARD.

Seize the caitiff ! (*To guards.*)

DONALDUS.

They dare not — cannot ! This is not my hour.
 Its features have been shown me with the rest,
 That when it comes I know, and bid it welcome.

EDWARD.

Better it had come ere now — nay, better yet,
 That thou hadst ne'er been born, than live to slander
 The head of England's chivalry.

DONALDUS.

I meant,

As him on whom the prophet stole had fallen,
 But to deliver that I have received
 To thee, O king, with prophet passiveness.
 But, as one born of Caledonian blood,
 Can I stand face to face with thee, thou spoiler,
 Nor feel it boiling to be cooled in thine ?
 But thou art spared to be the scorpion scourge
 Of neighboring nations round, till come the end ;
 When, like that ruthless reptile thou resemblest,
 Thy sting shall turn, at last, against thyself.

EDWARD.

Now, by St. George and Christendom's seven champions !
 Half of thy prophecy contents me well ;
 What warrior but must wish to prove a scourge
 Unto his enemies ? Thine other augury,
 Sir Soothsayer, we'll withhold our credence from
 Till some more special revelation force it.

DONALDUS.

Sir King, but late thou didst command me dumb ;
 Now, wouldst hear on, though hearing should appall thee.

(Fixed, like the bird, by fatal fascination.)

Know, then — and this shall be to thee a sign —
Thy son, thy first-born and thy best beloved,
In war thy buckler, and in peace thy star,
Shall die before thine eyes! Nor in the field,
Girt by his glittering host, and cheered to conquest ;
(As sets the sun upon the Solway's bed,
With rays of glory round;) the sable prince,
Like fiery comet, whose portentous train
Still terminates in gloom — shall meet his fate.
Low on th' ignoble couch, no more to rise,
'Mid countless pangs, and every pang a death,
Yet death delaying — heart-wrung, drop by drop,
Shall Edward and Phillipa's boast depart!
Yet for her sake, erewhile thy better angel,
Whose interposing pity saved from death
The burghers of Calais,* (and, present here,
Had surely saved those unoffending striplings!)
For this the vials of the wrath to come
Shall not be all poured out upon thy person,
But part on thy posterity. Yet, know

* I am aware that the conquest of Calais did not occur till twelve or fifteen years after the date of this piece, at the invasion of Scotland by Edward III.; but the temptation to commemorate an illustrious woman, to whom literature no less than humanity is so much indebted, (the foundress of Queen's College, and the patroness of Chaucer,) prevailed with me to hazard the anachronism; which, however, is hardly such in the mouth of one to whom the future was as the past.

Full surely that it shall be thus outpoured,
Even to its bitterest dregs. In token of it,
The conquests thou hast gained thou shalt restore
Ere thy career be closed. Thy very blessings
Shall prove thy bane. A numerous progeny,
The joy of other men, shall be to thee
And to thy realm the rankest seed of strife ;
Like to those horrid teeth once sown in earth,
Whence sprang up armed men. Not Scotland, then,
But thy own England be the seat of war.
The feuds once fostered between Scot and Scot,
Clansman and chieftain, prince and people here,
By arts of thine and of thine emissaries,
Shall tenfold be returned on English heads.
I look ! thy sworn successor dies by piecemeal,
The ling'ring death of famine ! at the hands
Of his own brutal subjects, trained by thee
To direst deeds. I see that ancient tower,
Reared by the noblest Cæsar of the twelve,
What time he conquered Britain, though he failed
To conquer Caledon. That tower in ward
The sacred majesty of England holds,
And o'er him stands the crooked Plantagenet,
(Monstrous at once in body and in soul,)
His coward weapon in his captive's heart.
Again that tower ! the same foul shape appears,

Searching new victims ; and the princely boys
Are 'reft of crown and life ! But what of these ?
Kings, princes, people, all are whelmed alike
In one vast tide of war. The crime of Cain
Renewed in each, ungraced with the remorse
Of the first man-slayer. Bosworth ! Tewksbury !
Your fields are full before me. In mine ears
The clash of armor and the tramp of steeds,
And the fierce shout of triumph, strangely mingled
With the death-shriek, are there ! The paler rose
Is bathed in blood, the while its sanguine sister
Glares with a deeper dye. This shall befall,
Tyrant, the latest limit of thy line ;
Until, at length, athwart to England's sky,
Our northern light, our Stuart star shall gleam !
A hundred years of havoc shall avenge
THE WIFE OF SEATON AND THE SIEGE OF BERWICK !

END OF THE TRAGEDY.

CONSIDERATIONS ON THE CHARACTER OF LADY MACBETH.

THE universality and antiquity of any opinion afford an argument so potent in favor of its truth, that to attack it is an attempt at once difficult and thankless. Those matters which the wise among mankind have passed upon, are generally considered as put at rest, and endeavors at reversing a decision of the judges are accounted presumptuous and irreverent. This acquiescence in those who have gone before us is suited to the nature of a being like man, so mentally as well as physically dependent. It is analogous to his nature in another point of view, as proceeding from the same associations which attach sacredness to the groves of antiquity and the sepulchres of our fathers. If the ashes of sages deserve and receive our veneration, surely opinions, the immortal part of those sages, which once informed and now survive those ashes, are doubly deserving to be owned and hallowed. All this appears but fitting and commendable; yet that such deference may be carried too far must be acknowledged on the recollection that without some departure from it, no reformation could ever have been effected either in literature or religion—a reflection

which it is hoped will secure the ensuing remarks from the imputation of disrespect or temerity.

The tragedy of "Macbeth," besides the individual who gives a name to the play, presents to our view another as the accomplice, or as some have it, the instigator of his guilt. This personage is no other than his wife. She is considered by many as the principal figure in the piece, and by a remarkable concurrence of opinion, all commentators on this author represent her as a combination of cruelty—a species of female demon—a monster* of the poet's own creation. So far has this proceeded, that Macbeth, all bloody as he is, excites in us something like compassion; while his lady has to bear the double detestation due to her own sins and those of her lord. It may be well to endeavor at discovering the cause of this procedure, apparently so unchivalrous, not to say unjust. It may perhaps be found where we should least expect it—even in the natural excess of those romantic and poetical conceptions of the female character; whence a far less degree of guilt, where we expected only impeccable purity, will excite more odium than the most flagrant wickedness in the other sex. The fall of angels is a matter of record and faith; yet the fall of that better half of a race "a little lower than the angels," startles us as unexpected, and revolts us as unnatural. In the representation of dramatic poetry especially, where the wonderful agencies of sight and sound, and scenic decoration

* Steevens.

are all employed to heighten the effect, which we come to witness with minds preoccupied with those visionary notions of female perfectibility, it is no wonder if the rage of disappointment prevents our holding the balance with a steady hand. But in the closet, where the judgment is less subject to the senses, and where woman is calmly looked on as sharing the same mortal nature — liable to like temptations, and sometimes gifted with similar passions as man ; where her character, thus appreciated, if it lose in some respects, gains in others, receiving neither exaggerated encomium on the one hand, nor hyperbolical denunciation on the other ; but in short, is considered merely as a human being, deserving no more reproach than would attach to the same crimes in the stronger sex ;— where this is the case, the decision of critics on the character of Lady Macbeth appears to us utterly unaccountable.

That this decision does not conform to the intention of the author, seems to be inferred from the general plan of his tragedy, as well as from particular passages. He would else have represented Lady Macbeth as a leader, rather than an associate in wickedness. Had this been the design, it had also been fitting that those weird sisters, who are supposed gifted with a portion of omniscience to penetrate the purpose and ascertain the character, would have made her the first object of their mystic salutation ; instead of which they selected Macbeth, whose conduct indeed throughout the piece abundantly justified their choice. She appears wholly unacquainted

with the daring destiny of her husband, till apprised of it by his letter. This letter naturally brings on the soliloquy, in which the deed requisite for fulfilling the prophecy, and the nature of her husband for attempting such a deed, are subjects of speculation. The dialogue between them immediately preceding the arrival and death of Duncan, might at a first glance indeed seem to imply that she was the mover of the act.

“*Macbeth.* My dearest love,
Duncan comes here to-night!
Lady M. And when goes hence?
Macb. To-morrow, as he purposes.
Lady M. Never shall sun that morrow see.”

But on a more deliberate perusal, and especially to all who recollect the acting of the late Mr. Cooke in the part of Macbeth, the words—

“Duncan comes here to-night!”

seemed a sort of emphatic demand from her of an inference which himself had already pondered, but dared not give utterance to. It appeared almost an interrogation, and was spoken by Mr. Cooke precisely as it would have been had the interrogative been prefixed thus:

What if——“Duncan comes here to night?”

She accordingly, familiar with the workings of his mind, and seeing them now in exact conformity to what her meditations

had previously augured, interprets his half-expressed meaning, and "gives his thoughts a tongue." This is perfectly coincident with his whole conduct through the drama. He ponders his crimes; fears to disclose them; when disclosed, hesitates—letting "I dare not, wait upon I would;" finally, his ambition masters his fear, and he proceeds to action. Lady Macbeth appears to have possessed, together with equally ambitious views, a stronger intellect, a steadier purpose and more intrepidity of execution. In fact her whole character, both of mind and heart, seems to have been made of sterner stuff; and from this very circumstance her guilt, according to Professor Richardson's own hypothesis,* ought to be considered less aggravated than that of her husband; since such as are endued with naturally amiable propensities, and either pervert them to their purpose, or act in their despite, have much to answer for beyond those, who in sinning do no violence to nature, but rather accord with it. The same original conformation which makes her less amiable as a woman, makes her also less criminal as an assassin. When the ingenious professor attributed to this lady a character invariably savage, he must surely have forgotten that remarkable relenting which withheld her from the murder of the sleeping monarch :

"Had he not resembled
My father as he slept, I had done it."

* See his Analysis of the Characters of Shakespeare.

Bearing in mind our previous ideas of Lady Macbeth's collect-edness of nature, and this trait alone is sufficient to redeem her from utter, unmitigated reprobation. Considering her ardent aspirations for the crown; her previous vaunts of her own courage; the opportunity that now offered to gain the one and to prove the other; and at a moment so dreadfully propitious, that a similitude, a shadow, which memory conjured up and compared with the slumbering monarch, should wrest from her the victim, at the risk of losing him forever, at the mercy of accident or discovery, and dependent solely on her husband, whose infirmity of purpose she had before deprecated, and whose retorts she might well expect when convicted of similar "brain sickness" with himself; this, we repeat, exempts her from a total destitution of the human charities, by showing her accessible to filial, though not to loyal feeling.

We have observed thus much on the murder of Duncan—the only crime in which Lady Macbeth had any direct participation. If any palliative for this crime, let it not be forgotten that in its perpetration conjugal affection concurred with ambition.* It was not that she loved Duncan less, but Macbeth

* We are at a loss for the ground of Mr. Steevens's suggestion that she was deficient in this particular. To us, she appears to have returned, after her manner, all her lord's expressions of endearment: "my thane," "my husband."

" Gentle, my lord!
Sleek o'er your rugged looks, be bright and jovial
Among your guests to-night.
Macbeth. I shall, my love,
And so, I pray, be you," &c.

more. At that period of their history the notions of loyalty among the Scots, as well as of every other moral obligation, appear to have been very loose. Add to this that the character of Duncan, though eulogized by Macbeth as possessing virtues that would plead like angels trumpet-tongued, was virtuous, like that of too many of his species, only when compared with those worse than themselves. His treachery to the Danes during a recent truce, in which he first inebriated, then murdered them (a circumstance to which Banquo alludes) was the very counterpart of the scene in which he was himself doomed to be a sufferer. From the perverted ingenuity of Lady Macbeth's reasoning powers, of which many examples occur in the piece, it is not improbable she might have considered herself an avenger rather than an assassin*—an appointed minister of that "wild justice," which Lord Bacon has so finely denominated revenge. For the commission of this crime, however, prompted as it was by the united force of ambition, conjugal regard, and retaliation, she was not competent, it seems, without the aid of artificial stimulants:

"That which has made them drunk, has made me bold,"

is her exclamation after having drugged the potions of the grooms.

The surprisal of Macduff's castle, and the massacre of all his race, by far the most savage deed in the play, was the act

* So too the Clytemnestra of Eurypides.

of Macbeth alone. The murder of Banquo, also, was the spontaneous suggestion of Macbeth's mind ; and when his lady inquires respecting his meditated object, his reply seems to indicate that, in her husband's opinion, at least, she was not callous to the inflictions of remorse :—

“ Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,
Till thou applaud the deed.”

But if her husband's opinion were insufficient, we have ample evidence of her susceptibility to the agonies of self-reproach, in the subsequent scene, which represents her as their martyr ; in that bewildered reason, those midnight walks, and perturbed ejaculations, which, who that has witnessed, can ever forget ? Marmontel has somewhere invested misfortune with the sacred right of purifying her victims from their offence, and the man whom Heaven has punished, should become innocent in our sight. The furies which Lady Macbeth had once let forth upon others, turned back upon their owner and destroyed her. Whatever were her crimes, her fate was their avenger. The same sensibility which detests the one, should commiserate the other. Had she been the greatest of offenders, this would be but just to her ; that she was not the greatest, we have humbly attempted to establish.

That critics, so respectable as those employed on this play, the Johnsons, Steevenses, Richardsons, &c., should have exercised so little of their wonted discrimination in regard to this

part, we have before noted as, in our apprehension, extraordinary. That Lord Kaimes, especially, whose penetration as a philosopher enabled him to investigate principles and consequences, and whose profession as a lawyer accustomed him to compare evidence, and decide between contending claims—that his lordship should have pronounced Lady Macbeth a “character too bad to be conformable to human nature,” is at once too flattering to that nature in general, and too merciless to this individual instance. Lady Macbeth participates with her lord in the murder of their sovereign; its recollection haunts her repose, and finally drives her to madness and to death. Macbeth, to whom the assassination of Duncan was but a novitiate in guilt, proceeds from crime to crime, undeterred by those compunctions visitings which his better sense continued to him; and finishes his career with full possession of his reason, with a bold defiance of his fate. Which of these individuals should seem the most culpable? Yet the former has been the object of anathema, and the latter of comparative condolence.

It is grateful to the philanthropist to diminish the number of atrocious offenders, and something is also gained for poor human nature by endeavors to lessen the enormity of offence. “Who would wantonly add weight to the stone of Sisyphus?” Whatever items we can fairly deduct from individual guilt, we so far diminish that aggregate which weighs so heavily on our common race. Should the preceding reflections promote in any degree so salutary a purpose, they will scarcely be classed

with idle reveries. They refer to a character which, considered either as an historic instance or a poetic fiction, is certainly entitled to justice; and those to whom this claim would be unavailing, who feel not Lady Macbeth's interests, may yet take some heed to their own; since it is probable few exercises of the human mind are more pernicious, than that which consists in the contemplation of consummate, unmixed depravity. From this, the intellect in its healthy state revolts with loathing;—it is only when diseased and morbid that it discovers an appetite for poison. We are far from contending that the character of Lady Macbeth, with every allowance, does not exhibit deplorable deficiency; but not that desperate criminality which, independent of the disgust it occasions, loses its moral effect, since its excess generates incredulity. We have merely endeavored that she should not be consigned to entire and unequalled infamy; not be considered a “monster” beyond parallel; not be ranked with the Tullias and Clytemnestras of antiquity; or the Catherines of Medicis and of Muscovy in more recent times. We all sympathize with the faithful follower of “de Montfort,” in that simple exclamation over the body of his master:

“Thou wert too good to do a cruel deed,
And so it killed thee!”

Yet de Montfort was the murderer of his fellow. Does not the character of Lady Macbeth authorize the same conclusion,

since her offence received the same awful expiation ? Let this reflection recommend her memory to our mercy, and spare her in future from proving that bitterest imprecation of the sacred writings :— “ Thine eye shall not pity her !”

To educe good from evil is the high prerogative only of Divine Providence. But it is even here within the province of the moral alchymist to attempt something like humble imitation. He can decompose, combine, or transmute ; and if in the process any latent good should be elicited, or any superficial evil obliterated, the labor will not have been in vain.

CHILDE HAROLD.*

THE dislike which we entertained towards the productions of this writer, and the personal disgust which he excited by his unmanly behavior—to employ the mildest term—towards his wife, have hitherto prevented us from noticing any of his productions. But the cause of sound morals and good taste requires that we should suppress our own feelings, when the republic is in danger; and we do think it is like to sustain great harm, when one of its most conspicuous personages is detected in the act of sapping the foundations of virtue by the perversion of the attributes of genius.

That portion of the British public which is styled the nobility and gentry, indignant at being stigmatised as a mob of gentlemen who wrote with ease, in the time of the Stuarts, avenged itself for a long time, by not writing at all. Since the Hanoverian succession, the catalogue of royal and noble authors has received few additions, until within a few years, when Lord Holland, Lord Strangford, and the writer of the production before us, appeared the most conspicuous among those of their

* Childe Harold's Pilgrimage. A Romaunt. Canto III. By Lord Byron. New York, reprinted.

rank who have cultivated polite literature with assiduity and success. The last nobleman, it is well known, first distinguished himself in a poetical satire, written with all the personality, though not the party spirit of Churchill, and combining equal vigor with accumulated bitterness. For this publication, its author has since expressed his regret; and the expression would be honorable to him if regret had been followed by reformation. But the tone of his subsequent productions affords melancholy evidence, that the evil spirit which breathed those numbers, has never been finally exorcised, nor even laid for a season. Next in order to the satire to which we have alluded, was the poem of which the present canto is a continuation. On its first appearance, opinions of its merit were, as usual, various and contradictory. Its very title was not without allurement; and awakening one of those associations, by which a world of thought may be connected with a word, the name of a *pilgrimage* recalled the days of romance and achievement, of knights and princes, of Bruce, St. Louis, and Richard Cœur de Lion;—when a pilgrimage was undertaken to encounter peril, or to expiate offence. It was, indeed, found on proceeding, that the fashion of pilgrimages, as of every thing else, had partaken the mutations of this mutable world; but the name continued, and has doubtless attracted many an ear, which might have revolted at the ordinary denomination of travels or adventures. The heaviness of the Spenser-stanza, so unsuited

to our language, however congenial to that of Italy, deterred some from accompanying the “Childe” in his peregrinations. Others persevered, and though confined to the society of a most frigid churl, found some relief to its melancholy monotony from those occasional descriptions of natural scenery which diversify what otherwise were a dreary waste. Misanthropy, when resulting from the contact of ardent feelings with the chill atmosphere of the world, from the milk of human kindness soured by ingratitude, or the visions of fancy dispelled and disappointed by the realities of experience;—misanthropy from any cause, indeed, where the sufferer is more “sinned against than sinning,” is a character of mind than which few excite deeper interest, and on the stage or in the closet, it has exercised a most powerful fascination. Very different from all this is the misanthropy of Childe Harold. It is a display of sullen and proud, and morbid selfishness; an elaborate and repulsive exhibition of the worst feelings of our nature, as seen through the deforming medium of a distempered imagination. If this be, indeed, our nature, which we take leave to doubt—since though there may occasionally be monsters in the moral as in the physical world, they are not in the usual order of nature, but out of it, and who cares to see them?—but, if such were our nature, we are not obliged by the unhallowed curiosity which would force it on our inspection.

“Heaven’s sovereign spares all beings but himself,
That hideous sight, a naked human heart,”

and the veil that we owe to the mercy of heaven, should not rashly be rent asunder by the malice of man.

Lord Byron has been at some pains to disclaim all identity with his hero, and we are willing to take him at his word; but the striking resemblance between the features of what he advances in *propria persona*, and what he expresses by his characters, somewhat impeaches his credit. Be this as it may, we believe the effect of the “Childe” was, to leave on its readers, friends as well as foes, a feeling of dissatisfaction with the hero, the author, and themselves. Of the gross impieties of that work, we say nothing, as they have been sufficiently exposed in the journals of the noble author’s own nation; nor have the impurities of his later productions escaped the public justice, that should ever fall on offences of which genius, instead of being a palliative, is an aggravation. Of Childe Harold we expected to see no more, but he now reappears, and we are sorry to say, utterly unchanged by time or circumstance since we last met him. Far from advancing, he seems to have retrograded in interest; and—spite of the dexterous interweaving of matters personal to the writer with the musings of his Harold, we are but little moved. Perhaps the very frequency with which this occurs has defeated its own designs. Sorrow, like piety, we know to be a sacred and secluded thing; it shuns, rather than solicits, notice, and seems eager to recall even its inadvertent complainings. Even bodily privations—the most affecting of all calamities, because obvious to all,

might repel our pity if the subject of perpetual lamentation ; and Milton's allusion to his blindness, and that of Cowper to his awful mental malady, would, by too constant repetition, harden rather than excite our sympathies. The example of his favorite, Jean Jacques, might have taught this lesson to the noble author. Under a sense of real or supposed injury, to renounce his kind, and hide his miseries with himself from society, was natural and therefore touching. Far be it from us to judge lightly of such suffering, because possibly visionary. Whether actual or imaginary in its cause, it was real in its effect on the individual, and as such commands our commisera-
tion. All we would remark is, that he did not raise the spectre of his griefs in every page, like the author before us, till we most heartily exclaim with Denmark's heir,

“Rest, rest, poor ghost !”

Enough, and perhaps the reader may think, too much, of character ; let us come now to diction. The radical and reigning defects of Lord Byron's style are its inflation and obscurity—the latter being, in some degree, a necessary con-
sequence of the former ; and both together forming more than a match for any ordinary reader. Nothing can supply the want of perspicuity in prose or verse ; but the absence of this quality is more severely felt in the latter style of composition, where we are unwilling that a recreation should be converted into a task. In no department of the muse is this a pardonable

fault, except the lyric and dramatic, and there only because the instrument in the one case and the action in the other may supply the defect of the bard. In all other instances, obscurity is a defect, and one of which this canto affords so many specimens that we select the following only because among the earliest, to gratify the amateurs of the occult.

“ ’Tis to create, and in creating live
 A being more intense, than we endow
 With form one fancy, gaining as we give,
 The life we image, even as I do now.
 What am I! Nothing; but not so art thou,
 Soul of my thought! with whom I treasure earth,
 Invisible but gazing as I glow,
 Mixed with thy spirit, blended with thy birth,
 And feeling still with thee in my crushed feelings dearth.”

And again :

“ What deep wounds ever closed without a scar ?
 The heart’s bleed longest, and but heal to wear,
 That which disfigures it; and they who war
 With their own hopes, and have been vanquished, bear
 Silence, but not submission ; in his lair,
 Fixed passion holds his breath, until the hour
 Which shall atone for years ! none need despair :
 It came, it cometh, and will come,— the power
 To punish or forgive — in *one* we shall be slower.”

Slower than what? We do not assert that these stanzas, and many such as these, have absolutely no meaning;— we say

only, it is not sufficiently apparent for the purposes of poetry, and that those who readily, and without much reflection, divine it, may venture with encouraging anticipations among the mysticisms of Jacob Bemen.

On the whole, however, we suspect Lord Byron has found it for his interest to adopt this manner. Opinions and sentiments but half revealed may serve as a test of public taste ; and according to the reception of these “ambiguous givings out,” may their future development be pursued or renounced. Hid under the hieroglyphic of an inuendo, much may safely be hazarded, which it were indiscreet to divulge ; and hence we may account for what else might be unaccountable — how misses can read to their mammas, and quote to their admirers, the Turkish tales of the writer without hesitation, and how grave matrons to whose offspring the works of Goethe, Godwin, or Rousseau are sealed books, can introduce and recommend to their acquaintance a far more pernicious companion. But danger, it will be remembered, is not the less danger for being concealed. The mine to which a match has been laid, will inevitably explode under the tread of a passenger, though he may have ventured on it once and again without injury. Lord Byron is sufficiently intimate with human nature to know that the *equivoques* in which he deals, will accomplish his purpose surely, however slowly. If the writer draw but the outline, the reader will ultimately fill it up. Let a meaning be hinted, and there is always a powerful ally within, to intepret the

whispering of the tempter without. The asp once applied, there is no necessity of renewing the application; the venom may confidently be trusted to work its own way.

We mentioned as another characteristic of his lordship, a destitution, perhaps disdain of the grace of simplicity. All is inflated, extravagant, and hyperbolical. There is no resting-place for the feelings, where one may stop and take breath before he proceeds. The author breathes only in an atmosphere of exaggeration, and you must go on and faint not, respiring as he does—if you can. Now this is evidently artificial, and therefore, repels sympathy. It *cannot* be natural. No man *can* exist long in a perpetual fever; or, if an illustration drawn from disease befits not our poet, the sea itself—no unworthy emblem of his impetuous genius, is not always “at the flood.” One example may suffice in support of the charge—it is where his lordship is about to describe the impressions common to all who have ever visited the summits of a lofty mountain; the unuttered, unutterable reflections, or rather the suspension of all reflection, when, as has been finely observed, “we rather feel than think.” Behold how this natural and simple emotion is bloated into bombast in the following stanza :—

“ Could I embody and unbosom now
That which is most within me,— could I wreak
My thoughts upon expression, and thus throw
Soul, heart, mind, passions, feelings, strong or weak,

All that I would have sought, and all I seek,
Bear, know, feel, and yet breathe — into *one word*,
And that one word were lightning, I would speak ;
But as it is, I live and die unheard,
With a most voiceless thought, sheathing it as a sword."

The flaming sword of Angantyr himself, as it figures in Runic mythology, never had more pomp and circumstance attending its interment, than has this shadowy brand of lord Byron ! Perhaps there is no modern writer of similar dimensions so worthy a place in the next edition of Scriblerus. Poetical enthusiasm must be kept within the bounds of nature ; at any rate we do not think Lord Byron is one of the eagle-pinioned tribe who can

Soar through the trackless bounds of space
and indulge in those fine phrenzies which are impervious to ordinary capacities.

The ensuing lines are in far better taste, and explicit, and we think, in our author's happiest manner, both in the delineation of a tranquil and of a troubled scene.

" Clear, placid Leman, thy contrasted lake,
With the wide world I dwell in, is a thing
Which warns me with its stillness to forsake
Earth's troubled waters for a purer spring.
This quiet sail is as a noiseless wing
To waft me from distraction ; once I loved
Torn ocean's roar, but thy soft murmuring
Sounds sweet as if a sister's voice reproved,
That I, with stern delights should e're have been so moved."

And now,

“ The sky is changed ! — and such a change ! Oh night,
 And storm, and darkness, ye are wondrous strong,
 Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light
 Of a dark eye in woman ! Far along
 From peak to peak the rattling crags among
 Leaps the live thunder ! Not from one lone cloud,
 But every mountain now hath found a tongue,
 And Gura answers from her misty shroud,
 Back to the joyous Alps who call to her aloud.”

The illustrations that follow, though their force is, perhaps, weakened by extension, are strikingly appropriate, and possess great poetical beauty.

“ They mourn, but smile at length ; and, smiling, mourn ;
 The tree will wither, long before it fall ;
 The hull drives on, though mast and sail be torn ;
 The roof-tree sinks, but moulders on the wall
 In massy hoariness ; the ruined wall
 Stands when its wind-worn battlements are gone ;
 The bars survive the captive they enthrall ;
 The day drags through, though storms keep out the sun ;
 And thus the heart will break, yet brokenly live on.”

Among his descriptions of Alpine scenery, Lord Byron has paid a just tribute to the memory of that Julia, who gave to a former age an example of self-devotedness, similar to that which the French revolution has afforded in our own time, and whose filial piety recalls to our remembrance the memorable

words of the daughter of Malesherbes to her more fortunate companion :—"you have the glory of saving your father, and I have the consolation to die with mine!"

We passed over the stanzas relating to Waterloo ; for Scott and Southey have traversed the ground before, and the public by this time have "supped full with horrors." A more un-reproved banquet as well as unexpected, is furnished in the 57th and 58th pages. The sketches of Rousseau, Voltaire, and Gibbon, are given with much discrimination and strength of outline, so as to excite in us the fervent wish that Lord Byron might no longer employ his pencil in caricaturing ideal Harolds, but rather exercise its skill on a gallery of portraits from real characters.

Of the minor faults in this canto, may be mentioned a more frequent ruggedness of versification than we recollect to have before witnessed in its author. Examples are not wanting of that petty play of fancy, which, for want of a more definite term, is styled *conceit* ; and the thing signified, together with its sign, would agree better with a structure of verse formed, like that of Leigh Hunt, on the Italian model. There are instances of tautology, as, "*wild-wildered*;" of expletive, where "*Brunswick did hear* ; and of the obsolete, like "*sheen*," "*blent*," &c., which are neither useful nor ornamental. These, indeed, are trifles ; if any thing can justly be so classed in a writer of celebrity, whose blemishes are far more easily imitated than his beauties. That the works of Lord Byron contain beauties,

both of thought and expression, is not denied. They certainly do ; but unless finer and more frequent than those of any other—which they certainly do not—their evil is more than a counterpoise to their good, and leaves them little claim to rank with their less exceptionable cotemporaries. Fortunately for the lovers of English poetry, the present, beyond any preceding era, has adorned the United Kingdom with a cluster of poets, whose lives and writings reflect mutual lustre on each other. In the north, beside the lofty strains of their dramatic muse, we have the bold and beautiful imagination of Campbell, with the elevation of an angel and the tenderness of a man ; and Scott, whose varied and mellifluous versification is glowing with the prismatic colors, and like the mists of the Highlands, embodying a spirit. In England ; the claimants crowd upon our memory — Montgomery, whose lips seem to be purified by a living spark from the altar, like those of the bard whom he most resembles in his fervors of piety and patriotism ; Wordsworth the philosophy of whose rural reveries, if not always intelligible is often affecting ; and Southey, whose protean genius through all its transformations, whether as a British druid, or a Spanish chronicler, an Arabian Dervise, or an Indian Bramin, is constantly followed with delight and admiration !

Visions of glory spare the aching sight !

We have considered Lord Byron as a poet only ; as such only we should wish to regard him ; but he has chosen to

obtrude *himself* upon us by combining the memoirs of the man with the minstrelsy of the writer. It has been usual for matrimonial dissension to confine itself to the family hearth, for the sole edification and amusement of children and domestics,— and the world without was never the wiser. But such guarded decorums were only for plebeians; and the quarrels of lords and ladies, like those of Olympian deities, are to agitate a universe. The names of Lord and Lady Byron have been “hung on high” by the gazettes of Europe, and, thanks to the invention of letters and the facilities of commerce, they seem to be destined to attain similar “bad eminence,” in our own distant republic. We should have passed them by, however, with mingled feelings of pity, contempt, and indignation, did not the present production contain references and confessions that call for more decided animadversion. That Lord Byron should avow his contempt for “church links,” and his preference of “unwed” love, excites no surprise; being perfectly in accordance with all his former writings, in which love is constantly represented as an instinct rather than a sentiment, and where we discover not even one instance of any other than an illicit connection. Love, to his Lordship’s taste, must be lawless as his Corsair, or licentious as his Giaour; and, to do him justice, he seems as incapable of feigning as of feeling the comforts of a legitimate attachment. Here, then, in itself considered, was no matter for astonishment. The wonder is, only, how a poem containing such sentiments should be pre-

faced and concluded with a direct address to his daughter — an infant daughter! Should the passage in question ever meet her eye, surely it will be obliterated by her tears! Those whom the majesty of heaven could not arrest, have sometimes been awed by the innocence of infancy. But we grow solemn. Cumberland dedicated his works to his daughter, Sir Phillip Sydney, to his sister; Mr. Roscoe, to his wife:— for they were calculated to excite no glow but that of grateful exultation. Even Wilkes, in his poetic trifles that have a similar designation, breathes nothing but refinement. Should Lord Byron ever address another poem to his child, may it be such as she can read without a blush for her unworthy parent.

The minor poems attached to this volume had not been published when these remarks were written, and we have already occupied so many pages that we shall not trespass any longer on the reader, than to acknowledge that this canto contains some just reflections, and much moralizing truth. But these expressions, from so polluted a source, are to us, we confess, only less disgusting than the effrontery with which their opposites are as frequently avowed, and forcibly remind us of *De la Borde's* prophecy concerning Rousseau:—

“And in those days there shall come a philosopher, preaching from the borders of a lake. And when he talks about virtue and morality, no one shall be able to discover what is either virtue or morality.”

R O K E B Y.*

To assert the instability of popular opinion, would be to urge a truth so trite, it is obvious to all; but the consequent variations of taste being less apparent, do not engage so much of our attention. To follow this fluctuating faculty in its progress through the several ages since the revival of letters, and amid all the material and mental objects it embraces, might be a curious philosophical disquisition, but unsuited to the length of the present article, and the nature of this journal.† Such disquisition, however, would be far from mere idle speculation or amusing reverie. This salutary lesson, among others, might be drawn from it; that if writers possess the high privilege of ruling public opinion, there is always a sort of re-action in that public, which gives law, in its turn, to its former sovereigns. Hence those who have been led by a love of novelty, or turn for paradox, to introduce strange systems, either of sentiment or style, have been compelled to continue from necessity what they commenced from caprice. The public was pleased with the peculiarity, and its author obliged—perhaps against his

* Robeky : a Poem, by Walter Scott. Boston; published by Bradford and Reed. 1813.

† The Portfolio.

recovered sense — to persevere, or forfeit his popularity. The coarse conceits and licentious jestings of the mob of gentlemen in King Charles's days, might have originated in the momentary wish of pleasing the monarch or amusing the circle. Effusions of the moment, they were intended, perhaps, with the moment to terminate. At least there appears to have been nothing like settled systematic design upon the interests of society. But given to the world, and become the *order of the day*, the public taste once regaled with the stimulating banquet, would be satisfied with no other. This appetite, first injudiciously excited, may be said to have afterward "made the meat it fed on;" since its demands were such, that we must in charity suppose the original caterers had reason to regret their imperious popularity. In our own time, indeed, we have little reason to apprehend any inroads on social morals. Such attempts would be frowned into extinction, not only by the mass of mankind, but by those portions of it who are emphatically the "makers of manners." The fashion, fortunately for us, is usually on the side of virtue. But from perversions of our literature we have more to dread, because from these we are far less secure ; and these, though secondary, will not be deemed of trivial import, by any who consider the close affinity of justness of action, with propriety of expression — the delicate but indissoluble tie which connects refinement of taste with correctness of character. Let it not be forgotten that the same elegant essayist who first successfully inculcated purity of morals, had also the

glory of rescuing the poems of Milton from their partial oblivion, and recommending them to the notice of his country.

These remarks will not, it is hoped, be considered a digression from the head of this article. Nothing, surely, which treats of variety, popularity, or novelty, can be irrelative to the subject of Mr. Scott. This gentleman is generally styled the founder of a new school of poetry, but the title is not strictly applicable. The works of Mr. Scott are, in fact, a revival of the early English poems commonly called ballads; a collection of the best specimens from which was published some years since by the late Dr. Percy; who on this account is by Mr. Scott somewhere acknowledged "the father of this species of poetry." To one kind of originality, however, the author of "The Lay" appears fairly entitled. We know of no other poet who, writing in his own person, and for his own time, ever entertained the strange conceit of collecting and localizing in his works, all the colloquial barbarisms and provincial phrases, which were scattered amongst the wildest class of the wildest people, at a distant and even disgusting period of their national history. The works of Macpherson, and the wonderful fragments of Chatterton, it is true, were written in an ancient dialect; but they were designed to pass for antiques, and the diction was hence perfectly suitable to the date of their supposed authors. Both Chatterton and Macpherson would have ridiculed the project of publishing in their own name works of this kind, as equal in absurdity to that of stamping

our present coin with the impression which was current three hundred years back. This absurdity is so palpable, that while we admit, as high proof of Mr. Scott's powers, his being able to make the public forget it, we cannot look on this forgetfulness as equally honorable to that public. We have no dislike to the ancient ballad-writing. It was perfect in its season; and had it no other merit, would be of inestimable value for the evidence it affords, that poetry, in some form or other, is natural to man. But the lullaby that charmed us in our cradle, would be childish and harsh to our maturer ear, and after so much talent and labor have been employed in bringing forward and perfecting our language, to retrograde in this way is to treat our benefactors with ingratitude by rejecting their toils as unnecessary.

An apologist for Mr. Scott's manner, has lately considered all wishes at altering it to be quite as unreasonable as to exact "our exchanging the weapons to which we have been trained, and which we prefer, for the cumbrous armor of our ancestors." The metaphor, however ingenious, is applicable only in illustrating the opposite opinion to that intended by the author. It is this exchange of our accustomed weapons for the cumbrous armor of our ancestors, which is the very fault alleged against Mr. Scott. We have warriors introduced to us in the nineteenth century who are gauntleted and glaived after the fashion of their predecessors in the age of chivalry. All this in the *literal* sense is very proper. We must not be under-

stood to express any doubt of the propriety of adapting the costume of personages in poems, as in paintings, to the time of their supposed existence, not to that of the publication. But though this may with propriety be allowed to drapery, it is not as to language, for the best of all reasons, because it would be unintelligible. We can recognize James V. to be king of Scotland, notwithstanding his bonnet and doublet should be very unlike those his present majesty of both kingdoms might probably wear, if he chanced to visit Holyrood. But we cannot so readily recognize the character of such terms as "stalwort," "gramarge," &c., without reference to a glossary, an act which changes a poetic entertainment to the drudgery of a school exercise. Had Gray incorporated with his "Descent of Odin," particular phrases from the Norse tongue, the description might have been very grand, but to most readers very mysterious; or had the narrator of Madoc's enterprises celebrated his hero in the Welsh idiom, our admiration had hardly been retained at hearing *hur was born in Gwyneth, hur was voyaged to Aztlan*, but the sublime must have yielded to the ludicrous.

In the last poem of Mr. Scott, we are happy to see less of the obsolete, we think, than in its predecessors. The period it represents is also nearer to our own times, being that of the civil wars between Charles I. and Cromwell. We had intended a sketch of the plot, but relinquished it as superfluous, since the public curiosity will have anticipated any analysis. In both the plan and execution of the poem, its readers will perceive many

of the characteristic beauties and defects of its author. The old objection which was urged against his former works, of a sameness of characters amongst them all, applies with still greater force to the present, with the single exception of Wilfrid. In Bertrand, the real hero of the piece, we discover every trait of Rhoderic Dhu, but his love. Redmond reminds us of the Graeme; Matilda is the transcript of Ellen. Of these latter, not only the natures, but the situations are similar. Both are forced to the alternative, either of sacrificing the life of a father, or, renouncing the lover they prefer for a marriage with the one to whom they are adverse. De Wilton, in "Marmion," is left for dead on the field of battle, and his end so undoubted, that when met upon the heath he is supposed an apparition; and the horror of the encounter completely unnerves his potent adversary. In this poem, the assassin of Mortham considered he had "*made all sure.*"

" 'Twas then I fired my petronel,
" And Mortham, steed and rider fell;
" One dying look he upward cast,
" Of wrath and anguish — 'twas his last."

Yet is this chieftain afterward resuscitated, and his appearance excites the same ghostly apprehensions which had before been so effectual in the case of Marmion. Here, indeed, the visitation is even more opportune, as it interposes in the very last event of things, like Mr. Lewis's castle-spectre, for the pious purpose of preventing bloodshed. The heroes have not only

the same general resemblance in character, but in person. We see a family likeness in their forms and features. Mr. Scott seems to have no idea of a warrior who is not broad-shouldered, high-chested, dark-browed, with mighty arms, and gigantic stature; and did we use no other measure but his for heroes, we must be tempted to disbelieve there ever was such a being as Alexander the Great, or William of Orange, or Bonaparte.

If invention, either in character, situation, or incident, be essential to form the perfect poet, it will not be too much to say that Mr. Scott has not yet attained this point of consummation. His scenery and events have little diversity; his dramatic personæ never change. Knights, barons, minstrels, pages, warders—these he has made our old acquaintance, and while we acknowledge their claim, on that account, to our friendship, we should be glad of a chance to exercise hospitality, by an introduction, now and then, to accomplished strangers. Inanimate nature has also reason to prefer a like complaint. Of her thousand protean forms she is sketched in only a few; and these few are continually recurring. It has been said of Shakspeare's characters, that not only are preserved the stronger contrasts, those of the good and the bad; — but that the numerous personages in each of these classes are greatly diversified. Hamlet is not only unlike Richard III., but Horatio is unlike Hamlet. Mercutio differs from Benedick, and Falstaff from both. Nothing can be more dissimilar than is the description of circumstances, individuals, and countries,

in the poem of "Madoc," to the whole system of "Thalaba," and again, to that of "Kehama." The tranquil loveliness of landscape presented us in Campbell's "Gertrude of Wyoming," is contrasted, in all but sweetness of versification, with the noble animation of the "Pleasures of Hope." But to Mr. Scott, a succession of his wonted images and heroes seems indispensable to success. The only attempt made to forsake this track for a foreign tour, has been too little flattering to be speedily renewed. We presume there are few readers who would not rather peruse for the thousandth time, the description of Loch Ners, and Loch Katrine, and Teviot, and Tweed — than follow our minstrel through his Spencer-stanza and his Spanish "Vision." He is there no longer the mighty magician, but the magician deprived of his wand.

The poem of Rokeby abounds with delineations of pictur-esque and awful scenery. Some of these are merely sketched in a bold outline, others are filled up with circumstantial minuteness. Among the most attractive passages is the one at the beginning of the work. That which describes the firing of Rokeby Castle would have excited more of our admiration, but for an unlucky association with the burning of Old Drury, in a recent laughable volume. The most elaborate in detail but worst in taste, of any of these specimens, is that of the fourteenth stanza of the second canto, where near forty lines are employed in recounting the process of climbing a mountain. Mr. Collins — a name which no lover of poetry can pro-

nounce without reverence—in giving his personification of Danger, has thrown him

“On the ridgy steep
Of some loose, hanging rock, to sleep.”

We believe there are few readers who do not feel that the simple sublimity of this single image, would only have been weakened by any effort to extend or multiply its power.

Mr. Scott has seemed determined to compensate for amplifying on trivial events in the first of his poem by the little space he allots to important ones, at the last. To nothing indeed but the hurry incident to an author, whose printer has completed one half of the work before his employer has composed the other, can we impute the confusion arising from events which crowd so unceremoniously on each other, and on the reader, that each following page jostles the preceding one from his memory. We marvel much at this in an author whom rumor has represented

“As born to write, converse, and live at ease.”

One who, pressed neither by want nor sorrow, must have described the spoiled and wayward child of fancy, from observation rather than experience. The exquisite portrait of Wilfrid had been a general likeness in those days which drove Gray to disgust, and Chatterton to despair. But Mr. Scott's popularity is not only gratifying, but profitable. His laurels

are of gold. No wavering Parnassian garland, but solid British metal. By such a writer, the goad of necessity can be no cause of inaccuracy or haste. Yet to haste alone can we impute many instances of obscurity in this volume, which we have not time to enumerate. One, indeed, is so remarkable, that it appears the effect of design. Who is the real cause of Mortham's wrongs, we are never informed; and though probabilities concur to fix the charge on Wycliffe, yet it is by no means clearly ascertained.

The same passion for obscurity appears in the history of Redmond; and has in one instance betrayed the author into great improbability. Why the grandfather should have sent this child to England, to his relations, without disclosing his relationship; why so earnestly entreat for him protection, on the comparatively feeble claims of gratitude and hospitality, and omit the resistless ones of nature and blood, appears to us wholly unaccountable. But we recollect that it is poetic ground on which we tread, and that poetry is the province of fancy rather than fact. The same allowance we regret cannot be made for a most revolting passage at the conclusion. The martyr Wilfrid — the most original, tender, and really magnanimous character in the piece, who lived to promote the happiness of Matilda, and died to secure it — the interesting Wilfrid has no sooner breathed his last, but we are shocked by an instantaneous transition to the merry-making of nuptial festivities. The surviving rival avails himself of the fortunate moment;

“Steps in with his receipt for making smiles,
And blanching sables into bridal bloom.”

This may be very natural in Redmond, but suits ill with the “soft” and “pensive” Matilda. The Roman ladies, though made of sterner stuff, consecrated a year of mourning to Brutus, to whom they were bound by no tie but the general one of grateful patriotism. Surely, to the memory of a lover, a kinsman, a friend from infancy, something more than two little months might have been allowed; even apart from the important considerations of his having rescued her life, and lost his own from her unconscionable command, by wounds received in the assistance of her favorite! It had been sufficient to have left us looking forward to the union of Redmond and Matilda. Such a termination had been more soothing to the reader, more honorable to the feelings of the parties, and we trust more conformable to human nature. Instead of that we are summarily told,

“This chanced upon a summer morn,
When yellow waned the ripened corn.
But when brown August o'er the land
Called forth the reaper's busy hand,
'Twas then the maid of Rokeby gave
Her plighted faith to Redmond brave.”

We can only, in charity to Mr. Scott, attribute, as before, this instance of hurry to the demands of his printer, which would not allow time for the obsequies of Wilfrid; and the

public impatience may thus share with him the censure of leaving his heroine deficient in the decencies of common feeling.

We have thus hazarded some desultory observations on Mr. Scott's poem. The proof of their justice or injustice is in the hands of every one. If it should seem that we have been more studious of his blemishes than beauties, it was not because the latter are not seen, but because they are seen too plainly. The beauties of this writer's poetry are of the most striking and dazzling kind ; and their glare extends over his defects. In literature, as in life, we find the more showy and ostentatious characters attract general admiration, before refined and retired ones. The success that has attended this writer is as seductive as the nature of his poetry ; and both, we apprehend, are injurious to the interests of pure taste and classical verse, especially in this country. In Great Britain there are enough established models of the noblest form of poetry to oppose any recent peculiarities of the Muse. And while it is there recollected that the poems of Waller were universally read, while those of Milton were as universally neglected ; and the dramas of Shakspeare superseded by the ribaldry of Settle and his contemporaries ; present popularity will scarcely be considered an infallible criterion of permanent renown. But in a nation like our own, where the public taste is yet immatured ; and destined, as we probably are — some croakings to the contrary notwithstanding — to produce one day, poems which shall be

candidates for endurance, it is of no small consequence that the eyes of our future bards should not be attracted by any “Cynthias of the minute,” any wandering stars of literature, but rather fix on those permanent luminaries which, though alas ! suns to other worlds, have yet beamed on us some portion of their brightness. Our countrymen will be sensible that if respectable critics, as Dr. Beattie, Mrs. Montagu, Lord Lyttleton, &c., apprehended at the close of the last century, there were indications of the English language being on the decline,—the publication of a series of poems which may tend to accelerate that event, is no inconsiderable evil. We shall remember that to extend the empire of this admirable language, was one of the warmest wishes of patriots and scholars, in the scheme of our colonization. If this language is to know corruption or change, let it at least be in favor of the sonorous dignity of the Greek, the polished elegance of the Latin— the lively French, or melodious Italian ;— not for the mutterings of Highland nurses, and the jargon of Border outlaws. If our poets should not dare delineate a cavalier on the old plan of being as much *sans reproche* as *sans peur*, but must comply with the reigning taste for heroes in whom boldness supplies the want of every other qualification ; there is at least no necessity of recurring to Scotch marauders, equally ignorant and ferocious with our own aborigines, whilst we have a model so conveniently near us.

The length to which these remarks have been protracted, will be pardoned by those whose sympathies are alive to the importance of the subject; who wish well to society in general — to their own country in particular — and consider the interests of both as materially affected by the state of moral feeling and polite literature.

MONTGOMERY'S POEMS.*

MR. MONTGOMERY appears before the public with many claims on our interest and sympathy. A tendency to melancholy, predominant in his writings, and, perhaps, the original characteristic of his genius, has been deepened and rendered permanent by the sufferings of his life. In common with his great predecessor in sacred epic, the illustrious Milton, his ingenuous discussion of political and religious subjects, has exposed him to rigorous persecution; and much is it to be deplored that two individuals of the purest morals, the most exalted piety, and the most disinterested patriotism, should thus have

“————— Fallen on evil days,
On evil tongues!”

With these impressions we can never open a volume from this writer with indifference, and if these may be supposed to interfere with our singleness of judgment, we must admit the

* *The World before the Flood, a Poem in ten Cantos; with other occasional Pieces.* By James Montgomery.

fact. Our respect for the man certainly mingles with our estimation of the author, and we class this among those wholesome prejudices which none but stoics in criticism would disallow. We are far from approving that parade of ideal misery and elegant distress, with which some writers appear before the public. This may be considered a sort of *stage effect*, and like that, has seldom any power in the pathetic. The imagination only is addressed, and it is the imagination only that answers. The heart preserves a becoming silence. The querulous fastidiousness of Gray, and the caustic misanthropy of Lord Byron, may not always command our sympathy; but the loss of health, and friends, and liberty, are among those awful, actual evils, at which the sternest shudder, and the most obdurate relent.

The reader of a poem like the one now under consideration, owes it both to himself and his author, to bring to its perusal *suitable and distinct ideas of the kind* of excellence he expects. Simple and natural as is this requisition, we fear a compliance with it is by no means universal. How many rash judgments might this mental preparation have averted? How much of the unpopularity of certain productions at particular periods, may be traced to a disregard of this rule? Some of the warmest admirers of "The Pleasures of Hope" have been offended with the "Gertrude," for not answering the expectations which the very title might have informed them could not be gratified without every sacrifice of truth and nature. Instead of considering the work as a new and beautiful proof of its writer's

versatility of talent, they have summarily professed themselves disappointed ! In like manner, those who paid willing homage to the regular beauties of Southe's "Madoc," have been frightened from their allegiance by the erratic wonders of "Thalaba," and the "Curse of Kehama." We reiterate, therefore, our former injunction—that no reader should content himself with a vague indefinite expectation of excellence, he knows not how or what, but rather endeavor to form accurate anticipations of the species of entertainment which is suited to the nature of the subject proposed. As this particular species, when ascertained, shall be more or less agreeable to his previous tastes, he can persevere or not, at his pleasure ; but at any rate, his candor will not cast all the blame on the writer, which is equally to be shared with the reader. This duty, a paramount one to all authors, ought more especially to be observed towards such as write on themes not analogous to the popular literature of the day. Whoever should come with a fancy stored only from the romances of the Troubadours, or a memory filled from the more recent minstrelsy of Mr. Scott, with visions of barons and squires, and camps and tournaments, and the long *et cetera* of chivalric garniture, will find nothing of all this in the present production.

If such and so exclusive be his ideas, we would recommend a total abstinence ; as his sensations would else resemble, probably, those of a poor Neapolitan, who with all his poetical notions associated with the ballads of his native *improvvisorì*,

should be sentenced, by way of penance, to compass the pages of "Paradise Lost."

There are those, however, who entertain more liberal conceptions respecting the nature and extent of the empire of poetry ; and such we may invite to the perusal of this poem. Its scene is principally laid at an imaginary spot eastward of Eden, inhabited by the younger and more virtuous descendants of Adam ; and the time chosen for its commencement is the period when their elder brethren, the giant posterity of Cain, are about invading this little tract, which is represented as the only remaining residence of faith and freedom, even in those early times. The detail of this invasion forms the subject of the poem, intermixed with episodes, describing the race of giants, the characters of their monarch and his wizard instructor, the several events of scripture history anterior to that time, and those future dispensations which formed the vision of inspired prophecy. To give a particular interest to these events, an individual is introduced, who becomes the principal object of our sympathy and solicitude, during the whole action. Javan, a lover and a minstrel, ambitious of renown, becomes a fugitive from the place, and an apostate from the religion of his ancestors.

— “ He fled and sojourned in the land of Cain.
There, when he heard the voice of Jubal’s lyre,
Instinctive genius caught the ethereal fire ;
And soon, with sweetly modulating skill,
He learned to wind the passions at his will ;

To rule the chords with such mysterious art,
They seemed the life-strings of the hearer's heart !
Then glory's opening field he proudly trod,
Forsook the worship and the ways of God.
Round the vain world pursued the phantom Fame,
And cast away his birthright for a name.

— Yet no delight the minstrel's bosom knew,
None save the tones that from his harp he drew,
And the warm visions of a wayward mind,
Whose transient splendor left a gloom behind,
Frail as the clouds of sunset, and as fair,
Pageants of light resolving into air.

— The fame he followed and the fame he found,
Healed not his heart's immedicable wound ;
Admired, applauded, crowned, where'er he roved,
The bard was homeless, friendless, unbeloved ;
All else that breathed below the circling sky
Were linked to life by some endearing tie ;
He only, like the ocean weed upturn,
And loose along the world of waters borne,
Was cast companionless from wave to wave
On life's rough sea — and there was none to save."

After an absence of ten years, recoiling at the thought of assisting the arms of the giants against the land of his nativity, he yields to the impulses of remorse and affection, and returns to Eden. He obtains an interview with Zillah, who was the object of his early passion ; and his reception by her venerable father, the prophet Enoch, is not less affecting, from its recalling to our minds the beautiful analogue of the repentant prodigal. We are too sensible how much the effect of scenes

of emotion depends on their being taken in connexion with the rest of the piece, to mar it by quotation.

Perhaps we are singular; but the following simple couplets have to us something far more touching than is contained in many recent elaborate descriptions of female loveliness. The poet refers to the loneliness of the father of mankind, until the Almighty, who "willed not man to dwell alone,"

"Created woman with a smile of grace,
And left the smile that made her on her face.
The patriarch's eyelids opened on his bride,
The morn of beauty risen from his side!"

— And again, when Javan is contemplating Zillah, after his long exile —

"Time had but touched her form to finer grace,
Years had but shed their favors on her face,
While secret love, and unregarded truth,
Like cold clear dew upon the rose of youth,
Gave to the springing flower a chastened bloom,
And shut from rising winds its coy perfume."

The ensuing extract displays Mr. M.'s descriptive talents on a different subject — that of Cain under the malediction :

"Grim before him lay
Crouched like a lion watching for his prey,
With blood-red eye of fascinating fire
Fixed, like the gazing serpent, on the lyre,
An awful form that through the gloom appeared,
Half brute, half human ; whose terrific beard

And hoary flakes of long dishevelled hair,
 Like eagle's plumage, ruffled by the air,
 Veiled a sad wreck of grandeur and of grace,
 Limbs torn and wounded, a majestic face,
 Deep ploughed by time, and ghastly pale, with woes
 That goaded till remorse to madness rose ;
 Haunted by phantoms, he had fled his home,
 With savage beasts in solitude to roam ;
 Wild as the waves, and wandering as the wind,
 No art could tame him, and no chains could bind ;
 Already seven disastrous years had shed
 Mildew and blast on his unsheltered head ;
 His brain was smitten by the sun at noon,
 His heart was withered by the cold night moon."

He is introduced to elicit the musical powers of Javan, by whose melody he is gradually soothed into peace.

"The lyre of Jubal, with divinest art,
 Repelled the demon, and revived his heart.
 Thus song, the breath of heaven, had power to bind,
 In chains of harmony, the mightiest mind ;
 Thus music's empire in the soul began,
 The first born poet ruled the first born man."

We have mentioned this writer as inclined to melancholy. It is, however, by no means a moody melancholy, but has more of tenderness than gloom. The lines on the burial-place of the patriarchs will illustrate our meaning.

"A scene sequestered from the haunts of men,
 The loneliest nook of all that lonely glen,

With walks between by friends and kindred trod,
Who dressed with duteous hands each hallowed sod ;
No sculptured monument was taught to breathe
His praises whom the worm devoured beneath ;
The high, the low, the mighty, and the fair,
Equal in death, were undistinguished there ;
Yet not a hillock mouldered near that spot,
By one dishonored, or by all forgot ;
To some warm heart the poorest dust was dear,
From some kind eye the meanest claimed a tear ;
And oft the living by affection led,
Were wont to walk in spirit with their dead ;
Where no dark cypress cast a doleful gloom,
No blighting yew shed poison o'er the tomb,
But white and red with intermingling flowers,
The graves looked beautiful in sun and showers,
Green myrtles fenced it, and beyond their bound
Ran the clear rill with ever murmuring sound ;
'Twas not a scene for grief to nourish care,
It breathed of hope, and moved the heart to prayer."

We could with pleasure indulge ourselves farther, but our limits confine us, at present, to two more selections. The first is the energetic expression of passion, and furnishes an appropriate example of the distinction first made by Lord Kaines, between the actual imitation of the passions, and the mere description of them.

"A reprobate by birth,
To heaven rebellious, unallied on earth,
Whither, O whither shall the outcast flee ?
There is no home, no peace, no hope for me.

I hate the worldling's vanity and noise,
I have no fellow-feeling in his joys;
The saint's serener bliss I cannot share,
My soul, alas ! hath no communion there.
This is the portion of my cup below,
Silent, unmixed, solitary woe ;
To bear from clime to clime the curse of Cain,
Sin with remorse, yet find repentance vain ;
And cling in blank despair, from breath to breath,
To nought in life, except the fear of death."

The sentiments of the next passage must meet a powerful echo from every voice, were it only from association with existing circumstances.

" His heart exulting whispered ' All is mine,'
And heard a voice from all things answer ' Thine.'
Such was the matchless chief whose name of yore
Filled the wide world — his name is known no more ;
O that forever from the rolls of fame
Like his had perished every conqueror's name !
Then had mankind been spared, in after times,
Their greatest sufferings and their greatest crimes.
The hero scourges not his age alone,
His curse to late posterity is known ;
He slays his thousands with his living breath,
His tens of thousands by his fame in death.
Achilles quenched not all his wrath on Greece,
Through Homer's song its miseries never cease ;
Like Phœbus' shafts, the bright contagion brings
Plagues on the people for the feuds of kings.
'Twas not in vain the son of Philip sighed
For worlds to conquer ; o'er the western tide,

His spirit, in the Spaniard's form, o'erthrew
Realms that the Macedonian never knew.
The steel of Brutus struck not Cæsar dead ;
Cæsar in other lands hath reared his head,
And fought, of friends and foes, on many a plain,
His millions captured, fugitive, and slain ;
Yet seldom suffered, where his country died,
A Roman vengeance for the parricide."

Sufficient has now been quoted to enable the reader to judge of the nature and versification of this poem. The passages have been taken nearly at random, and are not superior to many others that offered themselves to our attention ; particularly those relating to the battle between these antediluvian warriors — the giant king — the translation of Enoch — and the death and character of the first man. To those whose interest may have been excited by this imperfect sketch, we add only, that the work concludes with the expulsion of the giants, and the union of Javan with Zillah.

Of the minor pieces in this volume, they are, with few exceptions, worthy of the author of "The Mole Hill," and "The Common Lot," two of the most original poems, for their kind, to be found in the compass of cotemporary literature. The moral poetry of Mr. Montgomery is, indeed, always of the noblest kind. He presents us with no train of truisms — no frigid dissertations on abstract fitness — none of the commonplaces of ethics ; but has the merit of enlivening our attention to trite truths and familiar rules of conduct, by throwing round

them the lights of a rich imagination through the softening medium of a feeling heart. In this respect he reminds us of the writings of Chateaubriand, making due allowance for the superiority of the latter in that *onction* which is an advantage the French language possesses over our own.

Notwithstanding the satisfaction we have derived from the examination of this production, we shall not be surprised if it should not attain immediate or general popularity. The diction may not always, perhaps, be found sufficiently dignified ; and the writer may have been led into this error by a laudable desire, pushed to an extreme, of imitating the simplicity of the sacred writings. This, however, is not frequent ; and there are abundantly more instances where vigor of thought has been accompanied with correspondent force of expression. From the evils incidental to the nature of the subject, the author has more to apprehend ; but these he shares only in common with all his predecessors who drew their materials from the scriptures, Milton and Klopstock not excepted. The golden compasses with which the Creator is described by the former as measuring the universe, excited the surprise of Gibbon,* who calls it "puerile in him, though such an image had been truly sublime in Homer. Our philosophical ideas of the deity are injurious to the poet. The same attributes debase our divinity which would have exalted the Jupiter of the Greeks. The sublime genius of Milton was cramped by the system of our

* *Essai sur les Belles Lettres.*

religion, and never appeared to so great an advantage as when he shook it a little off; while, on the contrary, Propertius, a cold and insipid declaimer, owes all his reputation to the agreeable pictures of his mythology." This critic may, indeed, justly be considered as no unprejudiced witness, since his infidelity may have influenced his taste; but similar opinions are entertained by many whose intellectual integrity is liable to no suspicion. But, waiving all discussion of a topic which would be sufficient of itself to fill an article far less circumscribed than the present, another cause of fear for the success of this poem is in its length. It has been observed with some plausibility that the age of epics has past — a remark equally applicable to all long poems, whatever be their nature, in an age when literary merchandise is judged by the weight, and the value of a book is inversely as its matter. Former critics would deny the claim of a rhymer to the title of poet, because he had not written enough.* At present, a similar conclusion is drawn from premises precisely the reverse, and a man shall cease to be applauded as a poet if he have written too much. Alas for the mutability of human tastes! On the other hand, a writer may derive consolation from these fluctuations, since they afford ground for probable calculation, that if the age of epics have gone by, it has not gone forever; the very existence of opposite opinions in ourselves, is an argument in favor of the revival of other ones in the generation that succeeds us — a reflection

* Cumberland, &c., on Gray.

as well calculated to moderate the exultation of the popular, as to diminish the despondence of the unsuccessful. After an age of bigots, said Ganganelli, comes an age of freethinkers; and so long as the world we inhabit is proverbially a changing world, the historian of the human mind may trace alike on all subjects continual alternation.

We cannot better conclude this article than with the lines on the power of poetry, in which Mr. Montgomery has so well asserted the dignity of his art.

“ There is a living spirit in the lyre,
A breath of music, and a soul of fire ;
It speaks a language to the world unknown,
It speaks that language to the bard alone ;
While warbled symphonies entrance his ears,
That spirit’s voice in every tone he hears ;
'Tis his the mystic meaning to rehearse,
To utter oracles in glowing verse,
Heroic themes from age to age prolong,
And make the dead in nature live in song.
Though graven rocks the warrior’s deeds proclaim,
And mountains hewn to statues wear his name ;
Though shrined in adamant his relics lie
Beneath a pyramid that scales the sky ;
All that the eye admires shall pass away ;
All that the hand hath fashioned shall decay ;
The mouldering rocks the hero’s hope shall fail,
Earthquakes shall heave the mountains to the vale,
The shrine of adamant betray its trust,
And the proud pyramid resolve to dust ;

The lyre alone immortal fame secures,
For song alone through nature's change endures;
Transfused like life, from breast to breast it glows,
From sire to son by sure succession flows;
Speeds its unceasing flight from clime to clime,
Outstripping death upon the wings of time."

W A V E R L Y . *

MR. OLDSCHOOL :—

OF those fashionable articles of modern manufacture, yclep'd *Reviews*, there are three kinds in demand. The first, which is vended chiefly by those wholesale dealers, the North Britons, has the name of some author, indeed, at the head of the piece, but nothing more; for both warp and woof are exclusively their own. To drop our homespun metaphor, the production of this class of crities may be called anything more properly than reviews. The next sort are from those who justify their sentence of acquittal or condemnation, by evidence extracted from the work itself, and thus judge the writer out of his own mouth; and the last by those who, relying on the notoriety of their subject, content themselves with a general discussion of its merits, without selecting any particular specimens.

Of these varieties, the second appears, on the whole, the most equitable; and especially where a work is little known,

* Waverly: or, 'tis Sixty Years since. A Novel. Attributed to Walter Scott.

may be instrumental, by means of its extracts, in attracting toward it the attention it deserves. But when public curiosity has already anticipated the recommendation of the reviewer, this method is no longer obligatory, and may become officious. This is emphatically true in the instance before us, since a novel attributed to Mr. Scott must have been in the hands of every one, and will exonerate us from the imputation of disrespect in omitting to exhaust time and patience in quoting what every one previously knows—a labor as superfluous as the form of introduction after the parties have become familiar.

It is one of the many incongruities of our nature, which we leave to be accounted for by the analysis of the metaphysician, that the very scenes which most agonize us, whether on the stage or in the closet, are those over which we hang with the highest ecstasy of interest and delight, like the terrible fascination ascribed to the serpent, which fastens, while it convulses its object. Of such a nature were the scenes exhibited at the memorable era to which these pages refer; and if they might be relied on as an impartial and accurate copy of those times, they would be an acceptable acquisition to the moral antiquarian. But of this accuracy, the only qualified witnesses—the surviving livers and actors in those days, must necessarily be few, and those few fast passing away; so that, after all, this period, eventful and interesting as it is, must submit to be judged like all others, not from the dubious narrative of the novelist, but from the less exceptionable, though less attractive

records of temporary journals, letters and memoirs. Wherever these authorities are in union with a work of fiction it may with confidence be received; and the reader of the volumes under consideration will be gratified with several such coincidences.

The Col. G——, for example, of our author, will readily be recognized as a faithful copy of a famous original, that Col. Gardiner, of religious memory, who fell in battle against the rebels, and whose remarkable conversion from the most sceptical levity, to the utmost austerity of faith and practice, has found "an honest chronicler," in Dr. Doddridge. The same may be said of the Duke of Cumberland's character, at least those features of it that are presented to us, have a likeness to the life, and would answer with some additional touches for William the Third. That of Prince Charles Edward, however, is the most conspicuous for its historical conformity. His intrepidity, his elegance, his enthusiasm—in a word, his chivalry—that rare combination of dignity with delicacy, the hardy heroism of the Scottish chieftain with the courteous refinement of the French cavalier; these were the traits of that illustrious, though ill-fated adventurer, and these are carefully preserved. That irresistible influence of his personal deportment, particularly in winning to his cause even the most unwilling, which is here illustrated in the interview with "Waverly," will recall to the mind of the reader the real interview, with its similar effect, as detailed by Mr. Campbell in a note to those lines, in which the

poet has discharged the debt of gratitude to the patriot and immortalized the memory of Cameron, of Lochiel. The Baron of Bradwardine reminds us of a similar mixture of bravery and pedantry, to be found, if we mistake not, in the chief of the De Lancasters, in Cumberland's novel under that name; and for the sketches from lower life—the faithful foster-brother and the cunning page—we cannot give our author higher praise than that of successfully imitating what he proposed as his model, the delineations of Miss Edgeworth, that peerless portrayer of Irish characteristics. But his Scots are evidently his *chef d'œuvres*. His English personages are by no means equally fortunate, and, perhaps, one of the least interesting individuals of the work is he who gives it a name.

The Fergus and Flora, the Highland Colonel and his sister are, after all, the principal characters who command a passionate and continued interest, and, as was said of Shakspeare's Queen Katharine, "the genius of the piece comes in and goes out with them." We feel under high obligation to the author for the space he has allotted and the force he has ascribed to the holy, undivided, undying affection which distinguished this unfortunate pair; so different from the ordinary run of romances, where no attachment is admitted but *la belle passion*, which is continually recurred to as the one thing needful, and the sacred ties which nature formed for us, are wholly superseded by those we form for ourselves. Our author seems, indeed, to have had a strange sort of jealousy lest the former of these should engross

too much of regard, and is perpetually obtruding disparaging insinuations—that the purity of his public feeling was alloyed by the intermixture of worldly motives, (as whose is not?) and appears actuated by a prophetic boding that this rebel highlander would usurp that allegiance from the redoubtable hero of the work which was his high and sole prerogative.

And here we must beg leave to enter our serious protest against a certain levity of manner which costs the author constant efforts to preserve, and which is not unfrequently overstrained and out of place. We notice this with more surprise, as it is contrary to his own convictions of propriety, as expressed in regard to Flora, whose pensiveness of mind he naturally refers to her habitual expectation of political events, “not to be accomplished without bloodshed, and, therefore, not to be thought of with levity.” Yet, in relating these same events, is he reckless of outraging our feelings by an assumed giddiness of style, (if we may so term it,) difficult to describe and impossible to participate; of which a remarkable instance is afforded by a sudden transition, in which none of his readers will care to follow him, from the bloody scaffold of the gallant Fergus to the vulgar balderdash of a highland hostess.

Obnoxious to the same criticism, is the heartlessness with which, here as in “Rokeby,” the lovers set about the merry-making of their own wedding, so speedily after the loss of their friends. Few men, we believe, even without any pretension to the vaunted sensibility of Waverly, could have indulged in

selfish speculations, or pursued their plans of personal felicity, while the life and fortunes of a friend, who might have been a brother, and of another, "than brother nearer," remained in such awful uncertainty. In real life such conduct would not escape animadversion, and the writer whose vocation is to paint the "living manners as they rise," should be cautious not to violate the decorums of those manners. On the cruel policy to which the chief of M'Ivor was the victim, our author bestows some deserved reprehension, "but it was the reasoning of those times," we are told, "adopted even by brave and humane men toward a vanquished enemy;" and he apparently congratulates himself that we shall never again hear the sentiments or witness the scenes that were then general in Britain.

We are sorry to see so little ground for such gratulations; since we have a distinct recollection of similar "scenes," and similar "sentiments" toward more than one of the British dependencies, which were prevalent in that country not quite "sixty years since." In the mysterious appointments of Providence, the last of the Stuarts, it is true, have failed from the face of the earth, and expiated their mistakes by their misfortunes. But the sanguinary penal code that slaughtered their adherents still remains in all its ancient rigor; unmitigated unless by the royal prerogative of mercy, which has been but sparingly exercised in cases of high treason. It is, indeed, melancholy that even Great Britain, which has so long enjoyed the lights of Christianity and the comforts of civilization, should

furnish, in some instances, so humiliating a check to our theories of progressive improvement; that the lot of Kilmar-nack and Balmerino in 1746, should be that of Emmett and Fitzgerald in 1798, and the fate of Wallace in the reign of Edward I, had been that of Washington under George III, had the fortune of the war been reversed, and the conqueror become a captive.

We disclaim any special animosity toward England, and respect what is really respectable in that nation, as much as any one, but as one impression only has generally circulated, it may not be without use to have the reverse of the medal exhibited occasionally; and the rather, as it comes, not from the suspicious source of a Jacobin journalist, or member of the opposition, but genuine from the hands of a court-bard and devoted ministerialist.

The work is dedicated, in some sentences of extreme modesty, to the late Henry Mackenzie, Esq., in whose praises we cordially acquiesce, though we marvel much at his being hailed by the appellation of "the Scottish Addison," frankly confessing we know of scarce any two writers of equal eminence who are more dissimilar. Mr. Addison's writings are celebrated chiefly for their ease and elegance, and the character, like that of the man himself, is refined but calm. Mr. Mackenzie, on the contrary, is tender and glowing; and his forte is decidedly in the pathetic. The influence Mr. Addison exerted on society was through the medium of the taste and imagination, rather than

of the feelings, with which he prudently forbore to intermeddle; and hence his manner, though correct and regular, is, in order to be appropriate,

“Correctly cold, and regularly low.”

The reverse is the case with Mr. Mackenzie, whose animated pathos is such as often to elude expression, and is indicated only by the frequent breaks in his sentences. Indeed, we know no writer (except Sterne, whom he most resembles in all but in delicacy) that abounds more in those pauses, “where more is meant than meets the ear.”

It is no reproach to Mr. Addison that he has not attained the sublime or impassioned, for he never attempted it, and there can be no disgrace from not reaching a mark at which one has not aimed. If it be true also that he could have produced a *“Julie de Roubigne,”* or a *“Man of Feeling,”* still less could the other have been capable to produce that revolution in composition which Mr. Addison had the honor of effecting.

The peculiarities incidental to the style of Mr. Mackenzie are obviously such, as in the hands of the unskillful, might be easily perverted to excess, and liable to caricature. It is, therefore, unfit for general use, and better suited to form one of the varieties of style, at a period when taste has acquired a fastidiousness that desires something new, than for an earlier era, when it needed only a safe and simple model.

In justice, then, to the respective claims of both these writers, to whom literature and morals have a debt of gratitude “still owing, still to owe,” we dismiss them with the award of King Lear :

“The coronet part between you!”

In the assignment of “Waverly” to Mr. Scott, we are on the whole disposed to concur, and think there is much internal evidence, in some of the poetry especially, to countenance this opinion. Those who object that they find an occasional tediousness in many parts of these volumes, which they never experienced from the verses of Mr. Scott, only afford another proof of the witchery of numbers in beguiling the attention to passages which would fatigue it if in prose. The scenery is certainly that which the Muse of this gentleman most delights to sketch, and there is the same minute description of the “pride, pomp and circumstance” of Highland warfare.

MADAME NECKER.

[1820.]

THE biographer of Mr. Addison considered it sufficient evidence of his merits, "that amidst the storms of faction, in which his life was passed, the character given him by his friends was never contradicted by his enemies." A similar conclusion might be formed respecting the distinguished lady whose name gives a title to the present article, since, though excluded by her sex from political stations, yet, as the devoted wife and confidential friend of a minister who sustained an office more important, and at a period far more turbulent than that of Addison, she might be supposed to come in for her full share of factious misrepresentation. But among the various journalists devoted to the cabals of that period, none are recollected by whom the talents or virtues of this lady were ever subjects of depreciation.

It remained for a certain writer of our own, in a certain periodical work of late, to question, for the first time, these long established claims on public respect; and if one is tempted to exult unduly in the facilities afforded to literature by the age of printing and the liberty of the press, it may operate as a salutary humiliation to observe how the venerated names of

the excellent and the eminent are thus taken in vain by any one of yesterday, who is presumptuous enough to start up their self-constituted reviewer. The subject of Madame de Staél herself afforded materials for consideration sufficiently copious, it might have been supposed, to engross the limits of a single critique; but, in the present instance, her parents are first glanced at by way of preliminary, and we give this passage as an example of the superficial and summary mode in which this attack is levied, after the manner of the North British masters in the art of war: "Her father, M. Necker, was unquestionably a man of more than ordinary powers, but their extent was exceedingly disproportionate to his influence on France, and on the world. Of humble birth, a Protestant, and a foreigner, he overcame the obstacles which his religion and his country interposed between him and the loftiest station to which a French subject could aspire. He became the Prime Minister of Louis XVI, and the effective ruler of the French monarchy, but was wholly unable to wield the power which he had acquired, and his incapacity and ignorance did more, perhaps, than any other single cause, to hasten the revolution."

"Madame Necker, in point of talent a very ordinary woman, was ambitious of literary fame both for her daughter and herself. She published some books and pamphlets, which were little read then, and are wholly forgotten now, but it shows some intellectual resource that she was able to make her home the common and favorite resort of the most celebrated men of

the day." Of Mons. Necker's abilities it is quite unnecessary to speak ; they are before the world, and must be tried by his peers — political economists ; nor need reference be had to the well-known fact of his having been invited by several sovereigns of Europe, after his fall from power, to accept a post in their respective dominions, similar to the one he had occupied in France, and this, too, in spite of a revolution which our sagacious diviner of causes considered as hastened by his "ignorance and incapacity." The more unchivalrous assault on Madame Necker, it may be as well to notice, not for her sake — since it may safely be presumed in this case, as in that of her lord, their united reputations will yet continue, the wounds inflicted in those two paragraphs to the contrary notwithstanding — nor for the sake of those who read and think for themselves, but for such only, if such there be, "who humbly sip their learning from reviews."

This lady, as Susan Curchod, the daughter of a Swiss clergyman, early secured, by her virtues and talents, the admiration of Gibbon, the historian, then resident abroad. Her union was prevented only by the opposition of the elder Mr. Gibbon, on account of the lady's want of fortune, and she was happily reserved for one who, equally appreciating her other excellences, could also sympathize in her devout sensibility and religious hope. After the death of her father, we find her nobly and successfully exerting her abilities for the support of herself and her surviving parent, by educating others. The next era of her

life was her marriage with M. Necker, and commencing a more splendid career in Paris. The contemptuous mention of "some books and pamphlets she published," which are said to have been "little read and soon totally forgotten," might, probably, have been repressed, if any prescience had aroused a fellow feeling, but it is not the first time that the historian of the fate of others has become unwittingly the prophet of his own. The publications of Madame Necker had an object far more hallowed than that of merely gratifying literary ambition. They were devoted, almost exclusively, to the subjects of education, and of the poor. If, as asserted, they were "little read" at the time, the same may be said of the most undoubted productions of human genius; and to have since been "totally forgotten," would furnish no new proof of popular insensibility. That they proved highly successful and acceptable, followed up as they were by her personal exertions in attaining their philanthropic end, may be gathered from the remarkable circumstance of their being specially acknowledged by the pastors of those parishes which were the scenes of their influence, in the public services, and the divine blessing invoked on their authoress—*heretic* as she was—not omitting a prayer for her conversion! We know of no higher use of talent; none, certainly, more felicitous to its possessor or the community.

The very success of these books, then, may inform us why they are no longer read—for the best and most flattering of reasons—because their object was immediate, and they

attained it, and because other individuals have since followed where this enlightened and benevolent woman was content to lead the way. It was in this manner she aided the efforts of her husband, by the quiet, efficient exercise of her powers on subjects of practical utility within their reach, and not by going out of her sphere to publish theories on government, or speculations concerning society. She proved herself the worthy associate of one who was confessedly, by all parties, a conscientious statesman, and who had the happiness of being able to boast, with Mr. Burke, "that during the darkest periods of his political life, every care vanished on entering his own house." Her letters to Gibbon, preserved in Lord Sheffield's recent collection, are, of themselves, sufficient testimony of her fine talents, did no other exist, while they are curious, as presenting perhaps an unique record of the pure and ardent interest that may be cherished by a married woman for the fame and happiness of a *ci devant* lover. Her anxiety for his concerns was never remitted, even during the arduous period when her own were in peril, and, to do him justice, he was, with all his characteristic cold-heartedness, so far sensible of her worth as never to replace her in his regards by any other connexion. Why she did not publish more and oftener, a singular anecdote may account, which is related in a late biography of her daughter.* It tells us that M. Necker objected to his lady's indulging habits of composition, from a dread that he might disturb her when-

* By Madame de Saussure.

ever he entered her apartment, and that Mademoiselle herself was obliged to write standing, and by stealth, lest she should also come under a similar interdict.

Without commenting on the whimsical peculiarities often discernible in great men, or conjecturing what distempered state of the nervous system, under the excitement of public anxiety, might have prompted so selfish a prohibition, one thing may justly be inferred: that if Madame Necker did indeed possess the "literary ambition" ascribed to her by our reviewer, and yet submitted in deference to the above request, its suppression was more honorable than could have been its brightest exertion, and gave her reason to say, like Mrs. Grant, that she was less proud of what she *had*, than of what she *had not written*. In the same sentence which speaks of Mad. N. "as very ordinary in point of talent," it is conceded, with no great heed to consistency, that she must have had "some intellectual resource," since she was able to make her house the "common and favorite resort of the most celebrated men." Candor would have admitted the fact as evincing the *greatest* intellectual resource; when it considered how many circles of this sort were already established in Paris at the time of her arrival, and by native and celebrated French women, who are allowed beyond all others to excel in this mode of entertainment. When, too, the extreme difficulty of getting up and managing *coversazione* is taken into view, and how often it has been ineffectually attempted in England, (even with all the advantages

of the late Mrs. Montague, for instance,) we may consider it unequivocal evidence of distinguished powers in Mad. N., a stranger and foreigner, to have succeeded in harmonizing the jarring interests of so many literati, and making heterogeneous materials amalgamate so as to produce a union of the useful with the agreeable. All this was accomplished without any aid from gallantry and intrigue, the usual bane of such *coterie*s. After glancing at the L'Espinasses, the Geoffrins, the du Deffands—names which form an almost unbroken association in the mind between the ideas of female literature and licentiousness—it is a relief to let it rest on the phenomenon of at least one woman, who combined the refinements of a Parisian *bel esprit* with the moral energies of a Swiss mountaineer. Without becoming the censor of her age, or indulging eloquent declamations on its abuses, she was solicitous to afford herself an exception to them ; and while lenient to the follies and vices of others, her own principles were unperverted, her own practice unsullied. Among sceptics, she preserved her Christianity ; among Catholics, her Protestantism ; among libertines, her purity. Her domestic and social affections were proof against the ceremony and selfishness of a court life ; and having been rendered neither giddy with power, nor intoxicated with pleasure, she met as might have been expected, the reverses of fortune without dismay. Her faculties were not bewildered in the shock of a revolution, which, convulsing alike every part of society, threatened private as well as public security, and she

became the solace of her husband's retirement, as she had been the ornament of his elevation — carrying with her the consciousness of having endured her ordeal triumphantly, fulfilled all the relations of life with the same dutious fidelity, and in the privacies of Lausanne, or the exposures of Paris, kept herself equally unspotted from the world. Like her daughter, she appears to have possessed a profound sensibility ; but in her own case better disciplined — less imaginative — less brilliant certainly — but for that reason less paradoxical. She appears to have excelled in the soundness of an understanding, more sober in its researches, more practical in its results, and not so liable alternately to mislead or be misled by its own sophistries or those of others. This difference of intellect, drawn out into action, produced a corresponding difference of conduct ; and made the course of the one white as the light and as steady also — a far safer object of emulation than the eccentric orbit, the meteoric and ominous splendors which characterize her descendant. Enough has probably been advanced in these statements to establish the point, that the subject of them was the reverse of “a very ordinary woman ;” and perhaps nothing better can be wished for France, than that her daughters, whether by descent or adoption, may resemble in all respects the *wife of Necker*.

MADAME DE MAINTENON.

I observed with pain, in some recent paper, a superficial and summary attack on the character of *Mad. de Maintenon*, grounded on such gossipings as those in the Recollections of *Mad. de Caylus*, and other French writers, whose national pride could never pass over the unprecedented elevation which placed a *plebeian* "so near the throne!" Their *Grand Monarque* might have had his many mistresses with impunity, but could not be pardoned *this one wife*.

But, though an illustrious woman has, on that account, been obnoxious to the prejudices of an aristocratic people, scrupulously jealous of any infringement of *Caucia regime*, yet, in republican America such objection is entitled to little weight.

Mad. de M. is charged, by these cavillers, with having been ambitious, *intriguing*, and a *devotee*. If ambitious, it is surely to her credit that she scorned to gratify the aspiring propensity by any but virtuous means; that loving Lewis much, she loved honor more; for, as respects intriguing to procure her advancement, (beside that the very *idea* of such advancement had been chimerical,) what intrigue could be carried on by one

without fortune, family, or friends, and whose very name had become a by-word to awaken associations of the burlesque and ridiculous ? That she was devout is willingly conceded, since even Protestants will not esteem her the less, that, being a Catholic, she should be a conscientious and devoted one. And this being the case, it followed but naturally, that she should be desirous of influencing the man she loved, and the sovereign she served, to be, in deed and in truth, a favorer of that faith which had proved her own solace through all the vicissitudes of her eventful career, and which, if he had not formerly denied, he had too often practically disregarded.

Had she not done this we might justly have suspected the sincerity of her attachment either to her heavenly or her earthly master. But the credit of this conversion, and the consequent rendering the Court of Louis XIV. devotional, and *therefore dull*, for which certain writers are so bitter toward Mad. de M., is not exclusively chargeable to that lady, however her principles must have been in favor of such an instrumentality.

It is to be remembered that those “dull days” were the latter days of Lewis, when, according to the course of nature, man becomes serious, if ever so ; that they were the season of calamity, of reverse of fortune, public and private ; when the successes of Marlboro' and Eugene had taught the proud and hitherto prosperous monarch that he held no “bond of fate ;” and when the sudden death, in rapid succession, of the Dauphin, his son and intended successor, the peerless Duke of

Burgundy, and the accomplished Adelaide de Savoy, with their infant son, had blasted the best hopes of the sovereign and the nation, and inspired the awful apprehension that the vials of Almighty wrath had been withheld, only to be poured in all their accumulated bitterness!

If adversity, then, ever made man religious, we may admit that circumstances became here powerfully auxiliary to the wishes of Mad. de Maintenon.

The King fled to religion as a refuge when all else seemed failing, and if, in the first period of his change, he was disposed to go to the other extreme, and multiply unnecessary observances and formalities, it was no more than the history of the human mind, under such misfortunes and mutations, might lead us to expect.

Sectarianism, indeed, which made the torment of Mad. de M.'s life, has not ceased to molest her memory.

It was her fate to live at a period of highest party spirit, religious not less than political, and the moderation and impartiality she endeavored to extend toward all, of course could never satisfy the zealots of any. She displaced Mad. Guyon and her adherents by the vigilance which counteracted their efforts to spread mysticism and mischief among her *Elèves* at St. Cyr; and, on the other hand, she jeopardized her credit with the Jesuits, and her favor with the King, by her attempts to avert his anger from the Archbishop of Cambray—(the more honorable as she disapproved his bias in favor of Quietism,

which had already caused her so much vexation.) The Huguenots, suffering under the revocation of the edict of Nantz, and the Port Royalists, from the suppression of their establishment, were not satisfied with her attempts at mitigating those evils, but demanded that she should have *averted* them ; not considering that, though the King's heart was in her keeping, his *conscience* was otherwise. *That* was under the guardianship of his confessor, Father de Tillins, a ferocious and bigoted Jesuit, whose fiery zeal prompted him to sing the *Nunc Dimittis*, while his palsied hand was signing the order for rasing the foundations of that asylum, so long hallowed as the abode of recluses, so celebrated for their learning and their piety ! The *equity* which had guided the public conduct of Mad. de M. was alike conspicuous in her more domestic concerns. She refused to gratify the rapacity of her relations, by elevating them to places for which they were unfitted ; nor would suffer even her sisterly regard for the Chevalier D'Aubigne to favor his pretensions beyond the sphere where they could really be of service to his king and country. Her own superiority to sordid considerations should have been a lesson for their imitation, since her total disregard of herself in this particular, left her pension unrecorded at the death of Louis, and it was remitted to her by the Regent Duke of Orleans, with the remarkable comment "that her disinterestedness had rendered it necessary." No slight homage, extorted as it were from a political

enemy, and the most dissolute of men, of whose principles and practice her whole life had been a tacit reprobation.

These dissatisfactions and discussions, though they could not prevail to change her conduct, yet disturbed her tranquillity; so that it may be doubted if the happiest days, on the whole, of her thirty years' preferment, were not those she passed at her flourishing establishment of St. Cyr; when, after having seen, as she said, the “King die like a Christian,” she remained in tranquil retirement; and, surrounded by the grateful *protégés* of her wisdom and her beneficence, could indulge the solacing reflection that she had not lived in vain!

THOUGHTS ON MILTON.

THE combination of the different talents in the same individual, for successful composition in poetry and prose, has been familiarized to us in so many instances among later English authors, especially in certain of our distinguished cotemporaries, that we may claim it as a characteristic of our own times. It is certainly one of comparatively recent exhibition. We find it apparent in none of earlier date than Dryden and Pope. They exemplified alike both styles of writing, and still retain in both their original rank ; while, among their immediate predecessors, the Essays of Cowley have long survived his lyrics ; and the epic of Milton has been read by multitudes, who have suffered “his treatises, tractates, and tenures,” to remain undisturbed among “literary sods.” From this decent burial, however, there have not been wanting disposition to disinter them ; and once and again the spirit of party, civil and religious, has attempted their revival. According to the opposite creeds of the respective critics, as Churchmen or Dissenters, Royalists, or Republicans, have their writings alternately been lauded or lampooned ; but as neither friendship nor enmity — which sometimes accomplishes the same end by different means

— has ever succeeded in rendering them popular, we are warranted in suspecting some inherent disqualification. For the third time the experiment is renewed, in consequence of the newly discovered “Treatise on Christian Doctrine,” and the number of elaborate disquisitions it has occasioned reminds us of a curiosity preserved in the archives of one of our antiquarian societies, consisting of half a score of MS. books of commentary upon the single Book of Revelations. All admit that the “Treatise” of Milton is of little moment, either to the memory of its author, or the edification of the community; yet, as they all unite also in making it the occasion of announcing their own sentiments on his life and opinions, we, too, may follow the fashion of the day. There is no paradox in asserting that the poetic genius of Milton, even had it been acknowledged alike eminent at the first, as ever after, would have been considered rather a hindrance than a help to his pretensions as a political economist. The province of each, indeed, seems as far asunder as the heavens and the earth. St. John, in the Isle of Patmos, fresh from the visions of that apocalypse to which we have referred, might as fitly have been summoned to control the dissensions of his native Judea, as the poet of Paradise Lost to direct the factions that divided England. As a guide he was too elevated to be useful, too splendid to be safe. Indeed, the sober decision of the public to regard genius of any kind with a vigilant and suspicious eye, appears justified by any consideration of its nature. That intellectual attribute,

to which we assign this high appellation, and which, confiding in its own resources, is originating and uncontrollable, is justly disturbed in political science, in favor of wisdom, which refers with more deference to experience and observation. Genius is proverbially restless; and men have felt that the balance on which their destiny was suspended, might not be poised by an unsteady hand.

The prevalence of imagination, the aspiration after a *beau ideal*, however conducive to success in the fine arts, becomes pernicious in that, when the aim — as the Roman Cato was reminded — should be not so much at what *was perfect*, as *what was practicable*. If the bard might destroy his poem, or the sculptor his statue, in the hope of transcending it at some happier moment, it was his own creation, over which he exercised but an owner's right, and the world, at the worst, might lose only an elegant addition to its unessential ornaments. But the same fastidiousness employed upon government endangers a machine which many hands have combined to form; which the consent of many minds is requisite to alter. The reckless assailant who would risk its demolition, in the vague desire of remodeling its fragments, with some fancied improvement, mightwhelm beneath the ruins the lives and liberties of contemporary and coming generations. After all, it is not denied that wherever sagacious statesmen have been found in men of genius, it was where this quality was associated, in its operations, with the amplest knowledge of human nature, a

combination not frequently discoverable, and assuredly not in Milton.

His men and women, or rather his man and woman, are like none other. His acquaintance was rather among books than mankind ; or among mankind chiefly with literati like himself; Hence, too, his unfitness for the drama, to which he once seems to have aspired ; but which he prudently relinquished in time to avoid going beyond the titles of his contemplated plays. In that wide range of observation which takes the gauge of universal character, from the prince to the peasant, from the philosopher to the clown, he was singularly deficient ; his *Comus*, the most admired of his attempts in this line, is dramatic chiefly in its form ; and the harangues of his supernatural interlocutors have not much in common with mortal colloquy.

That the poem of *Paradise Lost* should have been contemned at its publication, and at a period and among a people of no unenlightened character, is among the marvels of literary history. In recalling to its pages the truant attention of his countrymen, the lettered secretary of George I enjoyed at triumph far more congenial with his character than any of the honors attendant on his official station. The fine taste of a critic may thus be to an author what a fine light is to a painting; not indeed creating, but developing those beautiful touches which else might have been forever latent, and consequently lost to society.

In the department of sacred epic, the work of Milton was

alone, at least in English. That of Dante was known only through the dim medium of translation ; or that scarcely less dim insight which is said to be, at the utmost, after all, which any man can acquire in any language but his own.

The Italians, we believe, claim for their author a prece-
dence in merit as in time. In one particular the claim must be
allowed. From the era of Elizabeth, the Briton found in the
perfect phraseology of Bacon, every expression he could desire,
either for use or ornament. The Florentine was the inventor
not only of his poem, but of the words of his language in
which it was conveyed, the dream and the interpretation there-
of ; and Italy received beside a song the gift of a tongue.
Considering, too, the remoteness and barbarity of that age and
the numerous occupations of the author, as soldier, magistrate,
ambassador ; not merely a political writer, but an efficient
actor in its political commotions ; and if the impediments which
intellect has to overcome, should be taken into the account when
estimating its achievements, candor, perhaps, would assign the
pre-eminence to the author of the *Divine Comedia*.

Of the merits of Milton's epic, after so much has been told
us by such authorities as Barrow, Addison, Johnson and War-
ton, any thing additional were superfluous, if not presump-
tuous. Its defects received less consideration at first, and with
obvious reason, since, while even the former remained unheeded,
it would have been impolitic and ill-timed to designate the
latter. To those internal advantages was united, as we have

seen, the adventitious recommendation of being without any object of comparison ; whether it distanced all competition, or whether the public had wearied of two works of similar extent on like subjects ; which, perhaps, may help to account for the cold reception of Paradise Regained, exclusive of its intrinsic inferiority. And if such were the case then, how much more so now ?

The age of epics, we have been truly told, has gone by. With the multiplication of claimants for notice in every department of literature, the notice to each must necessarily be circumscribed ; and *length* becomes a defect for which no excellence can atone ; unless human life could be lengthened in proportion.

The subject of this poem, moreover, formerly procured for it audience with those who considered poetry in general but an unhallowed pastime. The stern Puritan, who eschewed the whole art and mystery of verse-making, yet allowed himself to follow the flights of Milton, if not as a great, yet as a godly poet ; and among their New England descendants, instances are not wanting, perhaps within the recollection of some, when the Paradise Lost, with the Night Thoughts, the Pilgrim's Progress, and the odd volumes of the interminable series of Clarissa Harlowe, composed the whole authorized circle of profane literature.

We confess ourselves in agreement with those who consider the admiration inspired by the character of Satan, as of inju-

rious moral tendency. Let him who doubts this tendency, compare his own emotions after reading the sermon on the Mount, with an effort to enter into its spirit, with those experienced while attending to the description or declamation of Satan, with a like surrender of soul to its influence, and judge by the result.

The heroes of the Iliad have been liable to some exception on this ground, but with less reason, for Achilles and Agamemnon were human beings, the story of whose excesses might serve as beacons to men of like passions; and they were limited in their career of evil, by the scantiness of human intelligence, and the brevity of human life.

But the supreme source of evil, with power indefinite, and exerted only to injure; nor only such in himself, but its instigator to all others, without any good; or in the strong language of his delineator, with evil become his good, and without a wish or possibility of reform—such a being should never have excited aught but unmixed detestation.

If it be objected that such a feeling is unhealthy to the soul, it is granted; and this is a reason why a devout mind ought not to have selected a character which could in justice and truth excite none other. He should have emulated the guarded silence of the Scriptures on this head. While copious in descriptions of the Deity, and employing alternately on his majesty and mercy all the magnificence and tenderness of oriental imagery, they are sparing in their reference to *Satan*,

representing him as an adversary to be dreaded for his power, or distrusted for his duplicity, but never dilating on his attributes to fire the fancy or command the admiration. Let us not deceive ourselves in a matter of such moral import, let not the sonorous language of the poet, how sublime soever, beguile us of our rectitude of judgment. The “unconquerable will,” the spirit never to submit or yield, is one of the worst features of the worst men. It is the spirit which makes our rabble at an execution look with contempt on the penitent, and with respect on the ruffian who *dies game*. It is the spirit most hostile to Christianity, and most the reverse of that embodied in its Founder.

But at present, fashion has felt an increasing dread of confounding the pioneers of Fancy and Faith; the time for Scriptural subjects has now also passed away; and they are now as reverently avoided, as they once were reverently sought.

The “Paradise Lost” is now more admired than read, we suspect, and we content ourselves with paying to its author, as the devotees of Thibet to their grand Lama, a distant and unseen adoration. We suspect this from having known men of the highest abilities and reputation, who could not relish Milton.

After having paid our willing tribute to the grandeur and loftiness of his Muse, we feel something wanting in the tender and pathetic. We do not experience that mastery over our feelings, which some other bards exert to a degree nearly over-

powering. The forfeiture of Eden for a single transgression, one would think an event sufficiently piteous, yet who ever wept over the strain that records it ?

The coarseness and roughness of his portraitures of the affections, strike us more in contrast with the exquisite representations we have been furnished in an age so prolific in poetry as our own, and are not likely to be more tolerated as that refinement advances ; this has been noticed, we remember, by one of the most approved among modern tourists, whose remarks, had we his volume near us, we should willingly substitute for ours. And the origin of this defect lay deep in the man, in those illiberal and ignoble views of the female character, which affected both his temper and his understanding. He is scarcely a step in advance of a *patriarch of the Pentateuch*, or the *modern Mahomedan*.

ON MRS. GRANT'S LETTER RELATIVE TO GEORGE IV AND QUEEN CAROLINE.

[1821.]

SIR Thomas Brown wrote a book, if we remember, under the title of "Vulgar Errors;" and from his time to our own, various have been the efforts of ingenious men to prove certain current opinions of their respective communities deserving only the same appellation. Much effort has been wasted, for instance, to convince us the Italian statesman, Machiavel, after being so long proverbial for subtlety and dissimulation as to have his name become synonymous with that of those qualities, was, in reality, a very upright, candid sort of man; and my Lord Oxford has expended much erudition in contending that Richard III, instead of a crook-back tyrant, murderer, and so on, was, strange as it may be, a handsome personage, and a mild, merciful sovereign.

To these popular mistakes may now, it seems, be added one as to the character of his present majesty George IV, who, according to the recent letters, said to be directed by himself to his people, and Mrs. Grant's duplicate thereof, is *tout au contraire* to what has been imagined. The world had been wont to think of him as corrupt in principle and dissolute in practice, deficient in every relation of life—a bad husband—a

bad father — disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy ; without sufficient probity to prevent his involving himself, for the second time, in debts he could not pay ; base enough to marry a woman he hated, for the sole purpose of discharging those debts, and ingrate enough, (by his own confession,) to cast her off the moment this purpose was accomplished. But *this*, we are told, is viewing the matter altogether in a wrong light. George IV ought, in fact, to be considered a truly magnanimous Prince, whose life has been a life of sacrifices. In his first public transactions as Regent, he renounced the political friends who had been his chosen associates, and calculated on remaining such ; an act for which he was accused of instability and perfidy. No such thing. It really proceeded — say the King and Mrs. Grant — from the refined motive of securing his royal father, if, peradventure, his reason had returned, from seeing himself surrounded with unaccustomed counsellors. In the private career of the Prince, the same spirit of “self-sacrifice may be discerned.” He not only immolated himself to satisfy the claims of justice, but also immolated her, who, according to the Church, had become part of himself, his kinswoman and consort, a victim to his creditors. His abandonment of her immediately afterward, appears, indeed, even to his apologist, an act of somewhat equivocal rectitude, it being rather inconsistent to deny a husband’s protection and yet exact a wife’s fidelity ; but even this is referred to a feeling of delicacy, which led him to revolt at remaining with a woman

whose manners and habits are alleged to be coarse and disagreeable—a cogent reason, certainly, however uncommon, for annulling a marriage. One might except to the suddenness of the act, as scarcely allowing time to ascertain what the manners and habits of a partner really were; but such objectors do not allow for the extreme sensitiveness of the Prince's feelings. It may be matter of surprise, too, how such attenuated feelings could be attained and preserved amid a succession of casual connexions, "joyless, loneless, and unendeared," but we know that delicate flowers spring up in unpromising soil; so long as he had these feelings we would not speculate as to how he came by them. Mrs. Grant suggests one source, from which we should hardly expect her to derive them — living for ten years in matrimonial habits with a "lady distinguished for elegance of deportment." His royal brother of Clarence, it will be remembered, lived in the like "matrimonial habits," with a lady of "equal elegance," who, after being long accustomed to do and receive the honors of his princely mansion at Busby Park, was at last abandoned, to die in penury, and be indebted to the charity of strangers for her burial! Seriously—for our irony is overpowered by the stronger emotion which such recollections excite — seriously, it is a subject of shame, not less than surprise, to see this *old* lady of Laggan, (and we use the word, not in ridicule, but as indicating that age should do better,) this old lady, this widow of a clergyman, with a judgment so perverted as to suffer her to write thus! Surely it is

not among the least evils attendant on a regal government, that it can warp even good and pious minds, such as those of Mrs. Grant and Mr. Wilberforce, to forget there is but one code of *commandments* for the high and the low; the first, as we have seen, losing the sinner in the sovereign; and the second, dedicating a work on vital Christianity to a "Sabbath duellist," because he filled the office of Prime Minister.

Let it not be supposed, however, from this specimen, that Mrs. Grant is a woman of lax notions of morality. It is *only wickedness in highest places*—a location that, with others, enhances its criminality, but, to her, diminishes it. Toward breaches of the decalogue, when they occur in a subject, she is sufficiently inexorable, and the vial of wrath, from which the sacred person of the King was secure, is poured without mercy on the head of his Queen. Things are here called by their right names with a vengeance, nor does the righteous anger allow itself to be tempered by any compassion for a fallen sister—if fallen she was—by any considerations of sex or situation—the one so weak, the other so forlorn—that might mitigate its penalty.

At this distance from Europe, and seeing through our only medium, the partial representations of both parties, we could not agitate the question of the guilt or innocence of Queen Caroline. But, if guilty, no offender had ever more to urge in point of extenuation. Brought from her own country, against her will, to a strange land, and disgraced to be the instrument

of freeing the heir apparent from the pecuniary embarrassments of his profligate minority ; outraged by having their connexion sundered as soon as formed ; a wife forsaken by her husband ; a mother separated from her child ; a Princess, tantalized with the title, without the honors of the station, losing one by one the attendance of those minions of power who took their cue from their master, and thought it not politic to notice whom he disregarded ; let any one of her sex revolve these unprecedented circumstances in her mind, and we will venture to say, that she who reflects most deeply and most painfully on the passions and weaknesses of a common nature, and then calculates how these are fostered and influenced by the false education of a court and the corrupt society of courtiers, *will not be the first to cast a stone.*

Mrs. Grant has some remarks to account for the late prevalent disaffection amongst her countrymen ; but, if her statements regarding the British public are not better founded than they once were of the American, (vide her History of an American Lady,) we may be excused from placing any strong reliance on their accuracy. She summarily refers the revolutionary spirit of the English to the example of the French, as these, in turn, impute theirs to our own ; a common and compendious method with nations, as with individuals, of shifting the burthen from their own shoulders to those of their neighbors ; in accordance with which the youthful excesses of his Majesty are charged (as Prince Hal's were to his hoary Falstaff) upon those

“dangerous associates,” Sheridan and Fox. But, let every one bear his own burthen, and as the French nation, it would readily be allowed, have native enormities in *plenty* to account for, the less should they be rendered answerable for any that are foreign. Besides, what Mrs. G. calls “going back to the beginning,” is an era much too recent to be justly so called. It is no new thing for the English to evince traits of insubordination. Such a spirit has exhibited itself from time to time, under every period of their history, sometimes with more, sometimes with less violence, long before the existence of what is styled the French Revolution. All that can be said is, that similar causes, when arising in either nation, have produced corresponding results. The evils of *popular ignorance*, for example, so ably set forth in a late eloquent essay, were common to both countries; and the bewildering effect of a few rays of light, darted suddenly on minds unprepared by previous education to receive it, may in some degree be imagined, when they were told for the first time of their rights, without possessing the cultivated judgment that could have directed to the true method of asserting them.

But, of the French Revolution itself, few at present suppose that it started into life, the full-grown hydra of a day or a year, and dating its birth from the 10th of August, or 2nd of September, 1792. It were attributing too much to any sect of encyclopedists, however able or willing to forward such a

prodigy, to suppose they did more than aid a work, the causes of which had been long and gradually accumulating.

Among these various causes, politicians have been obliged to enumerate, together with the oppressive forms of government, the vices of those by whom it was administered. The protracted and ruinous wars occasioned by the ambition of Louis XIV ; and the degradation, through the long minority of his successor, of all morality, in the person of the Regent Duke of Orleans—and of all religion in that of his preceptor, the infamous Cardinal Dubois ; the continued exhibition of a dissolute nobility, and a worldly-minded priesthood, during the reign of the imbecile voluptuary who next filled the throne ; the frequency of “ matrimonial habits” without matrimonial sanctions, and of superstitious ceremonies and observances, without an upright practice : all this depravity had accumulated before the eyes of the people, from year to year, until it became too universal, at the accession of the late unfortunate Louis XVI, for the solitary example of that conscientious and decorous monarch to counteract. Where abuses had been so long and so flagrant amongst the high, can we wonder there should be at last a reaction amongst the low ? And, so far as such corruptions have prevailed in Great Britain, (for that they have prevailed in some degree, who, that knows aught of its history, for the last score of years, will deny ?) they have been followed by the like consequences. It is hazarding little to predict such will continue to be the case, and that an oppressive and

vicious aristocracy will produce a riotous, disaffected populace ; though Mrs. G. is too prudent or too loyal to deduce any such conclusion, but rather comforts herself that all will be set right again, through the chivalry of some “young wits,” who have sprung up in Clydesdale, and who range themselves on the side of the “Altar and the Throne.”

But it is not in the power of knights like these, even registered, as we suppose their achievements to be, in the columns of Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine, to lend any external support to the throne and the altar, which shall be a substitute for the virtues that should fill the one and minister at the other. Shakspeare, a wiser than Mrs. Grant or her champions, has told “THE GREAT” they were the “MAKERS OF MANNERS.” Let them look to their own work. For ourselves, the moral to be drawn from these things is obvious : to heighten our gratitude for the salutary tendency of our own simple institutions, and our resolve to cherish that rectitude of character which, beneficial to all forms of government, is essential to the very existence of that which is republican.

OBITUARY.

[March, 1822.]

DIED suddenly, on the tenth of this month, Lydia, wife of Wm. Deane, of Salem, and daughter of Wm. Rotch, Sen., of New Bedford — a martyr, it is supposed, to fatigue of mind and body, from her strenuous endeavors to heal the late alarming dissensions in the Society of Friends, of which she was so distinguished a member. Deplorable as the sacrifice is, if it shall have the effect to restore peace, where there is no peace at present, not in vain will it have been offered! And if any thing could have power to allay animosities, and compose disturbances, it must be the overwhelming regret, that they have thus conspired to wound the spirit and break the heart of one in the meridian of her course, who was the centre of so wide a circle; and in whom the power and the will to be useful, were, by a rare felicity, so proportionably combined, that from a series of exertions, unremitting, though unobtrusive, we were justified in expecting a large aggregate of good, throughout the length of days which we fondly hoped remained for her.

To the blameless simplicity of deportment which usually characterizes her sect, Mrs. Dean added a liberality of understanding, and an enlightened estimate of human nature, derived from the peculiar opportunities she had enjoyed for extensive surveys of it, both here and in Europe. Blending thus the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove, she became so eminently qualified for the judicious exercise of the great influence her situation afforded, that when we dwell on her death, and its consequent privations to the weak, whom she fortified by her energy ; the wayward, whom she restrained by her tenderness and discretion ; the sorrowful, who looked to her for consolation ; the perplexed, who were directed by her unclouded judgment ; and the destitute, who were relieved by her unsparing charity, when we think of these things, we feel how difficult the lesson of submission and acquiescence, which our friend would have been the first to inculcate and to exemplify.

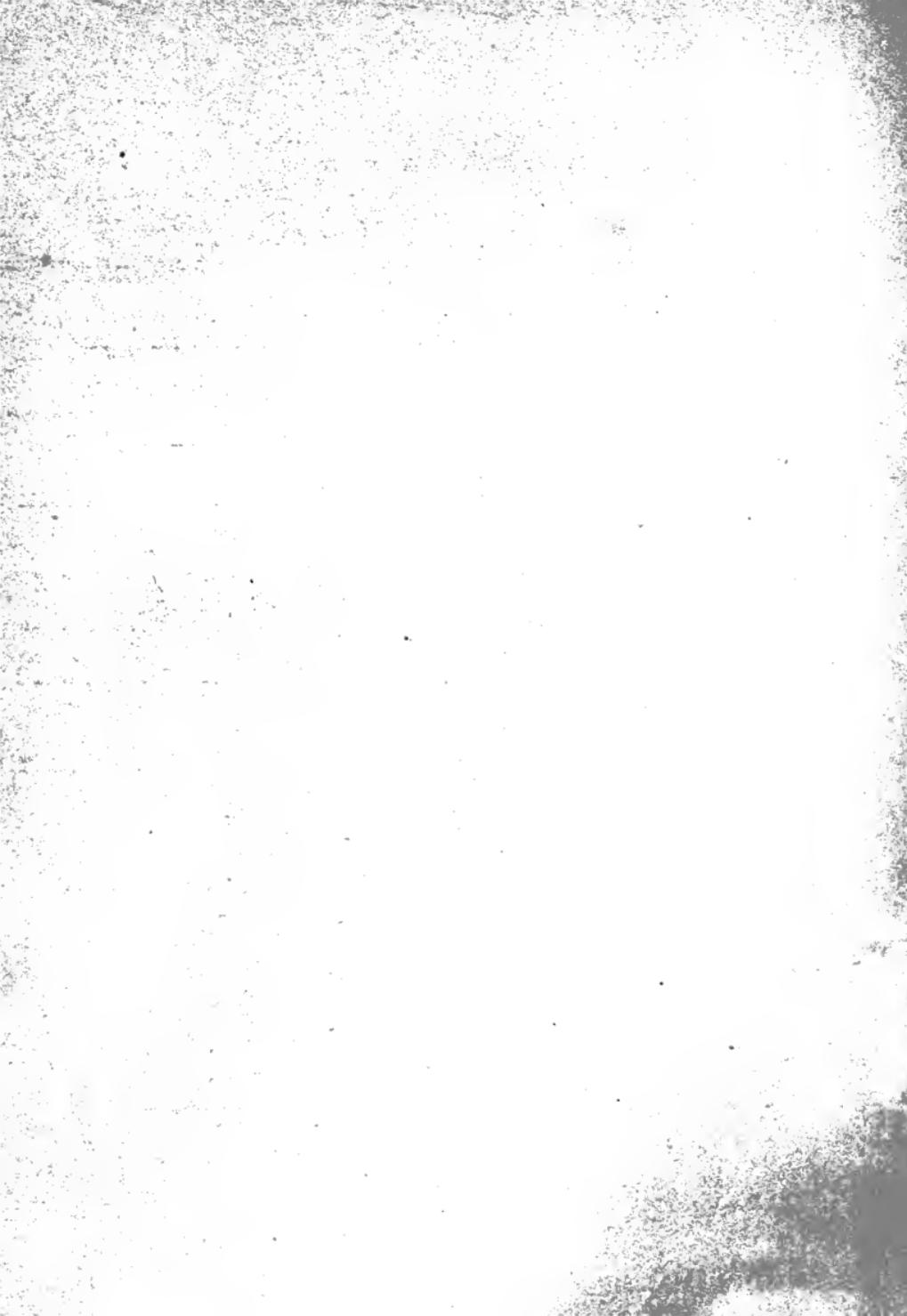
We are grateful, however, that such a character has existed, and that we have known her, believing few were ever privileged to be in her presence, who would not concur with us, that there was something hallowing in its influences.

The elevation and purity of her sentiments imparted a dignity to her figure, and a noble serenity to her aspect, of which every one was conscious, except their possessor ; but the awe they might else have imposed was softened into affection, upon witnessing the genuine and touching humility with which she

communicated the result of her abilities and acquirements; while the cordiality that gave a value to her most trivial courtesy, and the benignity that shone over her whole manner, made her altogether appear like a being from a better state than ours; so that an enthusiast in the faith of a pre-existence, might have found confirmation of his opinion in a cultivation of her society.

But with this impress of a higher world, Mrs. D. was not abstracted from the labors or the interests of this; but rational in her practice, as devout in her aspirations, no scheme however humble, no details however minute, whose object was probable utility, but she would patiently analyze and generously encourage. Thus consecrating her high powers to the purposes for which they were bestowed, she fulfilled her trust; *having loved her own which were in the world, she loved them unto the end*, and, consistent to the last, died as she had lived, in meek and reverential imitation of the Author of her faith, for the cause of peace on earth, and good will amongst men.

“ Her flight Narissa took — her upward flight,
“ If ever soul ascended !”







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